

University of South Wales



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PROMOTION SELECTION  
TECHNIQUES IN THE POLICE SERVICE

BY

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#### DECLARATION

Whilst registered as a candidate for the Degree for which this submission is made I have not been a registered candidate for another award of the CNAA or of a University during the research programme and no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award nor has any of the material been published in advance.

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Andrew Gethin Jones - Promotion Selection Techniques in the  
Police Service

ABSTRACT

The South Wales Constabulary, British Police Forces in general and a proportion of other organisations which have no connection with policing, operate policies of selecting senior staff from within the workforce. This often produces great intrigue amongst candidates as to how promotion selection decisions are made and can create a distrust of the system.

This distrust often centres upon a lack of understanding of organisational requirements and speculation about what really influences those individuals who are charged with the task of making selection decisions.

This work has examined the promotion selection system operated by the South Wales Constabulary to identify Sergeants who are suitable to be promoted Inspector and Constables who are suitable to be promoted Sergeant. Weber's analytical concepts of bureaucracy, power and authority have been utilised in an attempt to explain the system and the approach of assessors to it.

It has established the criteria which assessors claim are influential and sought to show that they vary according to who is doing the selecting. It has also examined the criteria and questioned whether different assessors interpret them similarly. The forum used for selection, the interview, has also been considered and a critical examination made of whether the criteria deemed important, can be evaluated in such an environment.

These aspects of the study have established that promotion selection is generally carried out on an irrational basis and that criteria which are claimed to be influential vary amongst assessors. It has also revealed that the selection interview does not generally provide scope for the evaluation of those qualities which assessors claim influence their decisions. The work has also embraced an examination of candidates perceptions of the criteria they feel influence promotion selection decisions, and shows that they are at variance with those, which assessors claim are influential.

Overall, the perceptions of candidates have been interpreted as an understandable reaction to an irrational selection system which they cannot hope to understand. In consequence, they have evolved various "theories" which they believe explain what is occurring at a promotion board.

Finally, the study has questioned whether the selection system, as it operates, produces more organisational problems than it solves.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE THEORY



In any organisation where staff are selected for promotion from within, the system used for making selection decisions will nearly always involve some element of assessment of candidates by senior staff. The criteria which determine success will, in most cases, be subjective and involve assessors exercising power and authority over candidates. A number of sociological theories may explain this exercise of power, but this research will rely primarily on Weber's exposition of bureaucracy, power and authority to provide an explanation. That being so, it is necessary to understand his approach.

Weber's celebrated discussion of bureaucracy highlighted his views on the three types of domination or authority which he saw occurring in society. They are Traditional Authority, Rational Authority and Charismatic Authority.

Let us consider each in turn starting with Traditional Authority. "A system of imperative co-ordination will be called 'traditional' if legitimacy is claimed for it and believed in on the basis of the sanctity of the order and the attendant powers of control as they have been handed down from the past, 'have always existed'. The person or persons exercising authority are designated according to traditionally transmitted rules. The object of obedience is the personal authority of the individual which he enjoys by virtue of his traditional status. The organised group exercising authority is, in the simplest case, primarily based on relations of personal loyalty, cultivated

through a common process of education." (Henderson and Talcott Parsons, 1947, p137). Expressed more simply, Traditional Authority, according to Weber, rests on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority. There is no reason or abstract rule underpinning its legitimacy. It draws its acceptability from its roots which are to be found in the belief that "it is ancient, that it has inherent and unassailable wisdom transcending any one man's reason" (R. A. Nisbet, 1972, 142).

Rational Authority differs significantly. It is epitomised in its purest form in a bureaucracy and characterised by the rationalisation of the personal relationships which are the substance of traditional society. It is founded on a belief in the 'legality' of patterns of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands. In many senses this form of authority cannot be seen as equalitarian although it cannot help but place emphasis on equality which is singularly lacking in Traditional Authority. In a national sense, all are equal under the law. In a bureaucratic organisation rules apply equally to all officials of the organisation. The emphasis is on the rules rather than on individuals. The bureaucracy or organisation is supreme and, by its very nature, strives for increased rationalisation of itself by the reduction of the influence of friendship, nepotism and various other factors which are so dominant in the Traditional System. Many of the characterising criteria of the traditional

order, such as hierarchy and obedience, appear in the rational order but are conceived from the application of logical and organisational reason. Authority is exercised in the long term interest of the organisation, in a way which is designed to improve effectiveness, ensure efficiency and further the drive towards identified organisational goals. The aspirations and goals of individuals within the organisation are of secondary importance to those of the organisation itself.

"Charismatic Authority" is that wielded by an individual who is able to show through revelation, magical power, or simply through boundless personal attraction that he possesses 'Charisma', a unique force of command that overrides in popular estimation all that is bequeathed by either tradition or law "(Ibid,p143). It rests on a devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual. In Weber's analysis of authority, Charisma provided an answer to the historical exceptions which punctured his principle of rationalisation. He saw it as something of a short term balancing concept to be viewed alongside his more fundamentally held long term view of the inevitability of bureaucratisation. He used it to "..... characterise self appointed leaders who are followed by those who are in distress and who need to follow the leader because they believe him to be extraordinarily qualified" (Gerth & Wright-Mills, 1948, p52). However, because of his firm view in the inevitability of rationalisation, Weber never saw Charisma as stable or long lasting. "It is the fate of charisma

he wrote "whenever it comes into the permanent institutions of a community to give way to powers of tradition and of rational socialization. This waning of charisma generally indicates the diminishing importance of individual action. And of all those powers that lessen the importance of individual action the most irresistible is rational discipline" (Ibid, p 253).

Weber's philosophy of history relied fundamentally on the principle of rationalisation. He saw a gradual movement from traditional authority in society, founded on patterns of behaviour laid down by custom, to rational authority manifested by the emergence of bureaucratic administration founded on goal orientated rationality. In this gradual but inevitable transition, Weber identified situations which clearly did demonstrate a break with traditional authority but which did not follow his model of rationalisation. He explained these by the concept of Charismatic Authority, a classic example being the following of Christ by the disciples. However, because of his overriding belief in rationalisation he only saw Charismatic Authority as a short term phenomenon and introduced the concept of 'routinization' which in the aftermath of the disappearance of the 'great man' ensures that his charisma falls into either of the two real types of authority, the traditional or the rational.

The Weberian model of gradual but inevitable rationalisation producing more sophisticated and enveloping bureaucratisation, brought with it an explanation of the characteristics of a bureaucracy.

Weber saw them as being:-

1. There is the principle of fixed and official jurisdictional areas, which are generally ordered by rules, that is, by laws or administrative regulations.

a. The regular activities required for the purposes of the bureaucratically governed structure are distributed in a fixed way as official duties.

b. The authority to give the commands required for the discharge of these duties is distributed in a stable way and is strictly delimited by rules concerning the coercive means, physical, sacerdotal, or otherwise which may be placed at the disposal of officials.

c. Methodical provision is made for the regular and continuous fulfilment of these duties and for the execution of the corresponding rights; only persons who have the generally regulated qualifications to serve are employed.

2. The principles of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of superordination and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by higher ones. Such a system offers the governed the possibility of appealing the

decision of a lower office to its higher authority, in a definitely regulated manner. With the full development of the bureaucratic type, the office hierarchy is monocratically organised. The principle of hierarchical office authority is found in all bureaucratic structures: in state and ecclesiastical structures as well as in large party organisations and private enterprises. It does not matter for the character of bureaucracy whether its authority is called 'private' or 'public'.

3. The management of the modern office is based upon written documents ('the files'), which are preserved in their original or draft form. There is, therefore, a staff of subaltern officials and scribes of all sorts. The body of officials actively engaged in a 'public' office, along with the respective apparatus of material implements and the files, make up a 'bureau'. In private enterprise, 'the bureau' is often called 'the office'.

4. Office management, at least all specialised office management and such management is distinctly modern - usually presupposes thorough and expert training. This increasingly holds for the modern executive and employee of private enterprises, in the same manner as it holds for the state official.

5. When the office is fully developed, official activity demands the full working capacity of the official, irrespective of the fact that his obligatory time in the bureau may be firmly delimited. In the normal case, this is only the product of a long development, in the public as well as in the private office. Formerly, in all cases, the normal state of affairs was reversed: official business was discharged as a secondary activity.

6. The management of the office follows general rules, which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, and which can be learned. Knowledge of these rules represents a special technical learning which the officials possess. It involves jurisprudence, or administrative or business management.'

(Ibid, p196, 197, 198).

How closely then does the police service fit the Weberian bureaucratic model?

Police officers are answerable to the law. Furthermore, the organisation of individual forces is formalised, with activities, controlled by codified instructions, most commonly known as 'Standing Orders'. Both the Statute and Common Law and Force Standing Orders distribute responsibilities to individual police officers and place constraints and requirements upon the holders of specific posts. The law itself, as well as the convention of

rank, give authority to holders of particular posts within the police organisation, to issue commands necessary for the discharge of police duties. Notably the recently introduced Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 further "rationalised" decision making by greatly extending the codification of responsibilities within the organisation, making specific officers, particularly those holding the rank of Superintendent, statutorily responsible for many day to day policing decisions. To underpin the rank structure, to maintain discipline, to provide redress for failure to discharge statutory responsibilities and to guard against excess use of authority, all police officers are subject to the law and to a discipline code which is itself quasi-judicial. Both the law and the code, whilst maintaining sufficient flexibility to allow for the imposition of a punishment intended to be deterrent or to be a reflection of the seriousness of the course of action perpetrated, provide rules which limit the severity and nature of the sanction which can be imposed, thereby guarding against an over zealous use of authority.

The giving of instructions and the imposing of sanctions are strictly limited by rank, with officers selected according to ability to fill posts at various levels within the hierarchy. This rank or hierarchical organisational structure makes the police service subject to the classical Weberian bureaucratic criterion of super and subordination .



The accountability of the police is a topic for continuing debate. Nevertheless, regardless of the viewpoint adopted concerning the degree to which accountability has progressed, it has to be accepted that it already exists in considerable measure. Accountability manifests itself in many ways in the Service; to an extent it is imposed by bodies which have a legal framework, most notably Police Authorities and Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, both of whom have powers to seek information and explanation and to exercise a degree of control.

On a more day to day basis, individual police officers and police forces are accountable to courts, judges and magistrates and this accountability coupled with that mentioned above, indirectly, but very importantly, make the Service directly responsible to the general public at large.

To assist in the discharge of this important duty of accountability, it is essential that accurate records are made and preserved of all policing activity. In this respect the Service maintains comprehensive written and computerised records of its actions, decisions and deliberations in a similar manner to "files" being kept in any other office or bureau.

How then does the Service fit the Weberian model in terms of the management of the organisation? Weberian bureaucratic office management presupposes thorough and expert training. Thorough training underpins every aspect of police activity. However,

formal training prior to appointment, in whatever form, is only of limited value in carrying out police duty. The very nature of the occupation is different from other work forms and academic training, in isolation, is only of limited value. Having said that, the pursuit of a protracted course of academic study, with the resultant broadening of intellectual horizons, is something to be welcomed in the Service and clearly is advantageous to a newly appointed officer facing the prospect of having to learn quickly in a totally new environment and culture. Nevertheless, worthwhile training, capable of equipping a police officer with sufficient skills to become effective, comes predominantly from within the Service. Similarly, experience and further in force training, building on natural potential, are the routes by which promotion can be secured. Thus the Service undoubtedly does fit that part of the Weberian bureaucratic management model which presupposes thorough and expert training, albeit that training is provided almost exclusively from within, rather than being acquired before appointment and then supplemented.

In many respects the Police Service more accurately reflects the Weberian bureaucratic requirement of official activity demanding the full working capacity of the official, than almost any other profession. Police Officers have statutory constraints placed upon their private lives which clearly prescribe what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Furthermore, the unique powers with which an officer is conferred are not limited to his 'on duty' hours and place upon him an obligation to act

irrespective of whether he is on duty. On a less formalised note, the office of constable carries with it a public perception of the standards, both on and off duty, expected from such a high profile public servant. These examples of the extent to which the office of constable demands the full working capacity of the post holder, demonstrate the correlation with this aspect of the Weberian model.

The very nature of policing in the United Kingdom relies for its effectiveness upon the support and co-operation of the general public. To maintain this support, regular and close contact between officers and the public is essential. This need for close relations, coupled with the fact that every incident an officer attends involves him being in contact with people, emphasizes the need for police officers to possess highly developed inter-personal skills if they are to be effective. Such skills are 'sharpened' by experience and their use in a highly developed form should not be discouraged. The unpredictable nature of policing provides great scope for inter-personal skills to be utilised to the good of the Service, and for this reason the management of the organisation needs to be flexible enough to allow individualism to permeate to the surface in day to day operational matters. This clearly limits the scope for exhaustive rules to be formulated to deal with every eventuality. Nevertheless, broad guidelines and constraints are applied which need to be learned and complied with. A thorough knowledge of what is acceptable and expected as

opposed to unacceptable and undesirable is the distinguishing mark of an effective officer. The existence of such constraints and guidelines brings the Service within that part of the Weberian model of a bureaucracy which requires the management of the office to follow general rules which are more or less stable, more or less exhaustive and which can be learned.

From the analysis presented above, it is legitimate to conclude that the Police Service closely mirrors the Weberian bureaucratic model.

In addition to merely satisfying the pre-requisites of the model, there is evidence within the Service of a gradual movement from traditional to rational authority. No where is this better illustrated than in the transfer of the authority to promote from the old "Watch Committees" to Chief Constables. The former system offered the opportunity for bias and nepotism and made very little use of techniques aimed at identifying true potential. Cynics may argue that equal scope exists for bias and nepotism in the current system but there remains a widely held view that a 'professional' Chief Constable is better able to make rational decisions about promotion than the lay persons and politicians who made up the Watch Committees.

The 'rationalisation' of the system, with power transferred to Chief Constables, was intended to allow the professional manager scope to better use the resources at his disposal for the good of

the organisation. For this rationalisation of the promotion system to be complete, a situation needs to be achieved whereby decisions regarding advancement are taken on the basis of objective and proven measurements of potential. In other words subjective judgements by those in senior positions, a manifestation of "traditional authority", need to be minimised.

To date rationalisation within the South Wales Constabulary is continuing, however promotion selection remains based upon subjective criteria which vary amongst selectors, perpetuating the continued existence of Traditional Authority within the organisation. To a large extent, the South Wales Constabulary is typical of other police forces in the country in this respect and also not unlike many other organisations who use similarly subjective methods of assessment.

One of the main objectives of this research is to establish the extent to which such a lack of objectivity exists and to explore whether the 'police bureaucracy' has failed to fully rationalise its promotion selection system for constables and sergeants.

If such evidence is forthcoming, inevitably the question needs to be asked, why has rationalisation been resisted in relation to promotion selection?

There is little argument that an organisational goal which has persisted for some time is the optimisation of the effective use

of resources. Paramount in achieving this goal is the identification of potential in the workforce. Whilst the goal is clear and the benefits of its achievement well understood by a large proportion of senior police management, the best method of implementation remains vexed.

Modern selection techniques, with various levels of proven success, have not escaped the attention of senior police officers. Nevertheless, there remains a reluctance to relinquish traditional methods, dominated by the selection interview. Why does this reluctance continue? Part of the answer may lie in the need felt by senior officers to preserve their position of power within the organisation.

This need sometimes manifests itself in Supervisory Officers feeling they must "look after" their men in return for continued loyalty and good performance. This brings into focus the concept of paternalism.

The essence of paternalism is encapsulated in the words of Alan Fox, "The key principle is that the junior, subordinate, or inferior participant is defined as having certain 'true' or 'real' interests which he or she is incapable of perceiving or pursuing. Responsibility for those interests is therefore vested in the senior or superior, who demands to receive in return the willing obedience of the person under his or her protection. Reciprocity is of the essence." (Fox, 1985, p3)

The fact that the concept assumes an inability on the part of the subordinate to perceive or pursue his own interests unaided, conflicts with the ethos which pervades the modern service, of encouraging officers to use their own initiative whilst being self-disciplined in their approach. Nevertheless, from the viewpoint of supervisors, the prospect of unbending loyalty is attractive, even if it has to be secured by perpetuating a belief, which may not be true, that it will be rewarded by the supervisor exercising his unassailable wisdom and guiding his subordinate's career along a path which is desirable and beneficial, but beyond the foresight of the individual concerned.

Clearly, the prospect of the supervisor's integrity being called into question is always present when this form of organisational control raises its head and Fox highlights this problem when he says, " Apparent ... is the possibility of exploitation by the dominant party, achieved by enforcing obedience to some command or policy which, though presented as serving the real interests of the subordinate, is designed to serve only those of the superior. There may, as a result, be no such symmetry as the full paternalism concept in practice, but rather an asymmetrical relationship in which a paternalist rhetoric or ideology seeks to mask the absence of care or concern on the part of the superior." (Ibid page 4.)

It is interesting to contemplate the extent to which candidates in the promotion system regard the need to secure a 'sponsor' as

important and also to gauge the degree to which loyalty and regular good performance are rewarded with promotion. If it is apparent that selectors do place a high level of importance on loyalty and good past performance, this may indicate that a degree of symmetry does exist within the paternalist model as applied in the South Wales Constabulary. On the other hand, if particularly heavy emphasis is placed upon these aspects, it may also indicate that selection is not based on the identification of potential and therefore not serving the true interests of the organisation.

Where candidates are unsure of the need to secure a 'sponsor', an opportunity arises for the unscrupulous supervisor to play on their uncertainties and to secure their loyalty, irrespective of whether he intends to reciprocate. Furthermore, those who completely reject the paternalist model and consequently feel free to question the thinking and decision making of supervisors run the risk of being "...condemned as wickedly ungrateful, presumptuous in claiming to know better than their natural superiors where their own true interests lie, and subversive in seeking to disrupt the natural hierarchy of leadership and responsibility". (Ibid page 4.)

Conversely, the supervisor who dismisses the paternalist model and disclaims responsibility for his subordinates' future career direction, perpetuates a situation in which obedience is difficult to secure, albeit it does not follow that a



subordinate's cry of being left to his own devices, will be assumed to exempt him from the duty of obedience.

No doubt paternalism in a real or imagined form plays a part in the promotion selection process and it is hoped that the extent of its influence will become apparent during the research.

Whilst sociological theories are pertinent in explaining the organisational approach of the police service in general and the South Wales Constabulary in particular, to the problem of promotion selection and also the approach of senior officers charged with implementing selection, similar sociological explanations may also be of use in understanding the approach of candidates within the system.

R.K. Merton in his work on Patterns of Cultural Goals and Institutional Norms talks about social and cultural structure having "...culturally defined goals, purposes and interests, held out as legitimate objectives for all or for diversely located members of the society" (R.K. Merton, 1968, p168). He is describing those things in society which are seen to be worth striving for. Within the cultural structure prescribed methods exist which regulate and control the acceptable means of striving for these goals. In the words of Merton, "Every social group invariably couples its cultural objectives with regulations, rooted in the mores or institution of allowable procedures for moving towards these objectives" (Ibid page 187). Often these

regulatory norms are based upon, or identical to, technical or efficiency norms; regularly the most direct or seemingly simple means of securing the goal are disallowed by other cultural norms which make the means socially unacceptable.

From time to time within social groups, situations arise where cultural goals become clear and all-pervading, whilst the means of achieving the goals, the institutionalised norms, are blurred.

Similarly the reverse can apply where institutionalised norms obscure the goal. These phenomena were observed by Merton and his writings on the latter are particularly interesting, "The original purposes are forgotten and close adherence to institutionally prescribed conduct becomes a matter of ritual. Sheer conformity becomes a control valve. For a time social stability is ensured - at the expense of flexibility" (Ibid, p 188).

Clearly, within a social structure, the aim is to strike an equilibrium between setting acceptable and culturally desirable goals and identifying reasonable and well understood means of achieving the goals, thereby ensuring, according to Merton, that "....satisfactions accrue to individuals conforming to both cultural constraints viz satisfactions from the achievement of goals and satisfactions emerging directly from the institutionally canalized modes of striving to attain them" (Ibid page 188).

Where an imbalance between the two phenomena exists, a climate of disharmony can arise. This can manifest itself in a questioning or abandonment of the goals or more likely the substitution of means of achieving the goals which are outside the institutionalised norms.

Merton gives an explanation of the approach of individuals to cultural goals and norms in his typology of Modes of Individual Adaptation where (+) signifies "acceptance", (-) signifies "rejection" and (+) signifies "rejection of prevailing values and substitution of new values." (Ibid page 191).

<u>Modes of Adaptation</u>		<u>Cultural Goals</u>	<u>Institutionalised Means</u>
1	Conformity	+	+
2	Innovation	+	-
3	Ritualism	-	+
4	Retreatism	-	+
5	Rebellion	<u>+</u>	<u>+</u>

In explaining the various types of adaptation, it must be remembered that Merton's writings on the subject were primarily concerned with an explanation of deviance in society. Nevertheless, many principles examined are relevant to other phenomena occurring in society in general and also within individual cultural groups.

How then did Merton view each of the adaptations?

### 1. Conformity

The stability of a society or cultural group relies for its continuance on the majority conforming to cultural goals and institutionalised means of achieving the goals. Where the majority fails to exist, scope develops for a breakdown in the social order. In Merton's words, "Unless there is a deposit of values shared by interacting individuals, there exist social relations, if the disorderly interactions may be so called, but no society" (Ibid, p195). Thus in any stable society it is to be expected that the majority will strive for culturally desirable goals through institutionalised means of achieving them.

### 2. Innovation

Where exceptional emphasis within a society is placed upon achieving culturally desirable goals, compliance with institutionalised norms may be abandoned in favour of less acceptable means of securing the goals. In a capitalist society, the classic example of the desirable goal is the accumulation of wealth, the pursuit of which often results in the distinction between 'shrewd operation' and 'sharp practice' being blurred. In short, the Merton innovator is the individual who strives for societal goals, perhaps even more strongly than most, but who abandons societal norms in favour of some other route to success.

### 3. Ritualism

Ritualism in society is, in many respects, the most difficult of the adaptations to understand. It involves an abandonment of cultural goals but an acceptance of and compliance with, institutionalised norms. It is characterised by the individual whose ambition has become blunted; he continues to pursue his life along lines which conform to societal norms but lowers his expectations so as to avoid disappointment and minimise risk. Merton encapsulates the concept of ritualism in his words, "But though one rejects the cultural obligation, 'to get ahead in the world', though one draws in one's horizons, one continues to abide, almost compulsively, by institutional norms" (Ibid, p204).

### 4. Retreatism

The retreatist is the individual in society who has relinquished cultural goals and at the same time abandoned institutional norms. Often his repudiation of the social structure will have emanated from a previous close assimilation of cultural goals and norms which produced a singular lack of achievement. Whilst the prospect of maintaining the goals and substituting new norms may have been considered, the retreatist often has to reject the new means because of what Merton calls "internalised prohibitions". Quite often the retreatist will be manifested by the individual who abandons a fairly comfortable traditional lifestyle in favour of becoming a vagrant; he 'drops out' of society.

## 5. Rebellion

The adaptation which Merton calls Rebellion can be quickly associated with many historical scenarios where the repudiation of societal goals and norms, often seen as repressive, unfair and preserving the interests of a minority, has been followed by tumultuous rebellion. However, Merton has gone to some length to explain that the concept of "resentiment" introduced by Nietzsche and developed by Max Scheler also fits neatly into his analysis of rebellion and that tumultuous uprising need not always be a feature of the concept. Clearly, to understand how "resentiment" comes within Merton's analysis, an explanation of the phenomenon is required. Merton sees the essential point distinguishing resentment from rebellion as being "....that the former does not involve a genuine change in values. Resentiment involves a sour-grapes pattern which asserts merely that desired but unattainable objectives do not actually embody the project values - after all, the fox in the fable does not say that he abandons all taste for sweet grapes; he says only that these particular grapes are not sweet. Rebellion, on the other hand, involves a genuine transvaluation where the direct or vicarious experience of frustration leads to full denunciation of previously prized values - the rebellious fox simply renounces the prevailing taste for sweet grapes." (Ibid, p210)

In simple terms, an analogy can be drawn between resentment and those who are resentful or discontented, whereas those who are rebellious go one step further and take direct action to throw

out those goals and norms which are the breeding ground for the resentment. It also needs to be said that successful rebellion, producing a revolution which introduces a new and lasting social order, probably depends upon sufficient numbers of those affected by resentment being convinced that direct action offers the only solution to their discontentment.

How then does Merton's analysis of Cultural Goals and Institutional Norms and his typology of Individual Adaptations impinge upon the Police Service in general and the South Wales Constabulary in particular? Since this study is concerned with one specific aspect of the operation of the South Wales Constabulary, this question needs to be narrowed to focus on the promotion selection procedure used to select Inspectors and Sergeants.

The pursuit of promotion is but one of the goals that has become institutionalised within the Police Service. The South Wales Constabulary is no exception and achievement of the goal brings with it status, power, rewards and prestige. The extent to which the goal is pursued by individual officers is a matter for speculation, but it is reasonable to assume that a proportion and probably a majority, seek to achieve it. As in any other bureaucratic organisation, prescribed routes by which promotion can be secured are documented and reasonably well known to candidates within the system. Or are they?

A central theme to this study is an attempt to identify the criteria by which officers are selected for promotion. The mechanical steps one has to follow to compete within the selection system are well known but the precise factors which determine success or failure are far more obscure. A fundamental assumption which prompts the research is that the criteria determining success vary according to who is doing the selecting. If that assumption can be proved, an immediate dilemma is produced, in that a cultural goal within the "police society", promotion, is well understood but the institutionalised norms by which it is achieved are not constant. Furthermore, the situation is probably compounded by candidates making assumptions about the required criteria, which may be at variance with those actually applied by the selectors. These assumptions further blur the already clouded institutionalised norms creating a situation in which candidates become frustrated at not being able to identify the route by which success is achievable.



CHAPTER TWO

THE LITERATURE AS IT RELATES TO  
PERSONNEL SELECTION

Having explained in Chapter one, Weber's concept of bureaucracy and his approach to traditionalism and rationality, it is interesting to look at the mechanics of the selection system used by the South Wales Constabulary and to consider whether they can be regarded as rational. Central to the system is the selection interview about which much research has been undertaken. A review of this and other research may provide an insight into the relative validity of various selection techniques. This is considered in terms of their ability to predict future performance and, in so doing, indicate whether they contribute to optimising the effective use of expensive human resources.

The extent to which Government has acknowledged the importance of making best use of police resources, is indicated in the following extract from Home Office Circular 12/1987, "The most important - and the most expensive of all police resources is manpower. It is therefore essential to ensure that the abilities of every police officer are used to the best possible effect."

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in their 1987/88 Police Statistics Estimates indicate that 72.45% of a net expenditure of £3,282,254,000 on the police service will be taken up by the costs of employing the police officers who work in the service. (This will include salaries, employers National Insurance Contributions, Police Officers' Allowances and employers pension contribution). Personnel expenditure on this scale emphasises the need for most effective use to be made of

the personnel resources available. This calls for coherent, well-tested and well-respected selection practices which identify potential both at the recruit selection stage and later when decisions about advancement are made. The research which has led to this thesis has endeavoured to examine one aspect of personnel management in one of the 43 police forces in England and Wales. Its aim has been to question whether most effective use is made of the personnel resources available.

For some time reservations have been expressed both by selectors and candidates about whether the current system for selecting officers for promotion to the rank of Sergeant and Inspector within the South Wales Constabulary, has succeeded in effectively using resources. Primarily these reservations revolve around a scepticism that candidates are being screened out of the promotion selection system at an early stage according to arbitrary and irrational criteria, details of which are never made known to the candidates concerned.

If such reservations can be substantiated clear evidence will have been established to indicate that a situation prevails in which talent is possibly being overlooked and animosity created amongst candidates, both situations creating the potential for a general demise in organisational effectiveness.

Having very briefly flirted with the thoughts and assumptions which prompted this research it is proposed at this stage to say

nothing about the current system but to move to a general overview of the literature as it relates to the relevant areas of personnel selection and to return later to a detailed account of the practices which currently prevail.

If staff are not to be selected externally for every post within an organisation then selection of individuals from within, for advancement, is a prerequisite of the organisation's continued existence. However, if such selection is to contribute to the raising of standards within the organisation it must be effective in identifying those most suitable for advancement in a manner that engenders confidence in the system amongst all stratas of the workforce.

Methods based upon "traditional authority", smack of paternalism, lack objectivity and create a breeding ground for cynicism. A rationalisation of the selection process towards a system which seeks to identify potential using techniques which can be further rationalised, goes a long way towards achieving defensible selection and a contented workforce. Drucker (1985) highlights how an organisation is affected by promotion decisions when he says "People in organisations tend to behave as they see others rewarded and when the rewards go to non-performance, to flattery or to mere cleverness the organisation will soon decline into non-performance, flattery or cleverness".

Questionably the achievement of the two separate goals of effective selection and staff confidence make the establishment of a well-respected and effective selection system doubly difficult, but in many respects staff confidence will automatically be enhanced by selection decisions which ensure that advancement is awarded to those who merit it. In this sense the two goals are not mutually exclusive. The notion that successful selection must do more than place 'round pegs in round holes' is highlighted by Monro Fraser(1956) when he said, "Successful selection must satisfy two quite distinct sets of criteria. It must provide the employing organisation with the human energy, physical and mental, which is the driving force behind all its operations. But it must also provide the individual employee with a rewarding outlet for the effort he is prepared to put forth during the time he spends at work." The cornerstone of most selection procedures is the selection interview. It has many advantages not least of which are those listed by Cohen and Gump (1984) as being: 1) that the hiring manager (selector) and the candidate have the opportunity for face to face contact; 2) that the interviewer (has) ... flexibility to choose questions; 3) it is relatively inexpensive and requires no extra costs for external validation or assessment centres; and 4) it is generally convenient to arrange and schedule".

Understandably, within the police service there is a predisposition to believe that police officers, because of their experience and the nature of their work, are good interviewers. For that reason the interview as a police personnel selection tool has long been regarded as sacrosanct. Nevertheless, much of that "institutionalised" confidence may be unfounded and for some time rumblings have emerged both from selectors and candidates that those interviewed and chosen for advancement solely on that basis (and also for initial recruitment) may not merit the confidence placed in them.

Nevertheless, the Police Services' faith in the interview is something which is shared by many other organisations, despite the scepticism felt by numerous commentators regarding its effectiveness as a selection tool. Arvey and Campion (1982), comment "Perhaps the glaring 'black hole' in .... the current literature concerns the issue of why the use of the interview persists in view of evidence of relatively low validity, reliability and its susceptibility to bias and distortion."

Herriot, (1987, p141) comments "The reviews of the selection interview have established that, as usually conceived it has very poor predictive power relative to other assessment tools. This conclusion has been reinforced by the recent use of meta-analyses, whereby data obtained from a number of studies are combined for statistical analysis. For example, Hunter and Hunter (1984) performed meta-analysis on two previously published reviews of the literature. They also analysed a data-set derived

from articles published in the two foremost American journals of applied psychology. The predictive validity for the interview in the studies in Dunnette's (1972) review was 0.16; and in those reviewed by Reilly and Chao (1982) it was 0.23. The overall validity for the data-set from the two journals was 0.14."

Whilst the validity of the interview has long been questioned some recent studies have tended, to an extent, to underpin its credibility. In the main work has been conducted to establish if interview validity can be enhanced by either interviewer training or structuring of the interview.

Arvey and Campion (1982), cite the studies of Wexley, Sanders and Yuki (1973) and Latham, Wexley and Purcell (1975) when they say "This early work suggested that intensive workshops that included practice with feedback and group discussions helps to eliminate rating errors of contrast, halo, similarity and first impression". Nevertheless Heneman in his article "The impact of interviewer training and interview structure on the reliability and validity of the section interview" fails to establish clear evidence that interviewer training creates a beneficial effect on validity. He did establish that "... there was a tendency.... for structured interviews to yield higher reliability than unstructured interviews ..." but also commented that "... the results indicate that neither training nor interview structure had a consistent marked impact on validity or reliability".

Various attempts have been made, with varying degrees of success to raise the coefficient of validity for the selection interview by structuring. Herriot (Ibid, p141) defines structuring by saying "First, contrary to usage in some other research areas, greater structure is used in the selection literature to refer to a reduction in the number of behavioural possibilities open to the participants. Among the variables which may be so reduced are the following:

1. Functions of utterancies; are the parties limited to asking questions and giving answers only, or are other functions permitted?
2. Functions by parties; is the interviewer the only one permitted to ask questions, or may the applicant do so also?
3. Content; are the topics, or indeed the precise questions, determined in advance?
4. Order; are orders of topic coverage and the functions of utterancies determined in advance?

Thus a highly structured interview would be one in which the interviewer asks the applicant a predetermined sequence of questions to which the applicant replies. An extremely unstructural interview would be a conversation in which the interviewer and the applicant both ask questions, give answers,



utter opinions, make offers etc., in no particular order and about topics which are not predetermined."

What then are the benefits of structuring? Maas (1965) showed greater reliability for his 'patterned expectation interview' than for a traditional procedure in which an applicant was rated for certain traits after the interview. However he did not produce validity data and Herriot (Ibid, p143) suggests that "..... the significant increase in reliability which was obtained may be attributed to the use of the same type of evidence by all the interviewers to arrive at their trait rating."

Herriot (Ibid, p143) also points out "Latham (1980) and Latham and Soari (1984) avoided some of the pitfalls ignored by Maas and concluded a proper job analysis using the critical incident technique. They then asked applicants how they would behave in specific situations on the job, those having been derived from the critical incident analysis. Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale with job experts having previously stated behaviour typical of a grade 1, a grade 3 and a grade 5 response to each situation. Interviewer reliability was high (0.76 for hourly workers at a sawmill; 0.79 for foremen), and so was concurrent validity".

Overall, the interview as a selection tool is suspect. More reliable results are achievable where some interviewer training or structuring is introduced into the process. Herriot (Ibid)

sums up current thinking in his words, "Where the interview is in its usual, relatively unstructured form, validity and reliability are poor. However, where a very high degree of structure is introduced, considerable improvements are found. This is hardly surprising since the structured interviews actually possess those characteristics which give psychological tests their reliability and validity. These are standardised procedures and content and similarity between predictor and criterion measures. Such highly structured interviews remove from the situations many of the interpersonal features which are valued by interviewers and applicants; they are, in effect, work-sample tests or biographical inventories rather than interviews in the generally accepted sense."

In recent years the police service has recognised the limitations of the interview and has tempered its predisposition to view it as the cornerstone of its selection procedures. Widespread progress has been made in introducing extended selection techniques for recruitment and limited initiatives have emerged in applying assessment centre methods to promotion selection. Nevertheless the validity of the promotion' selection systems used in the police service has not been tested either in terms of the suitability of the tests applied or whether reliability is appreciably greater than that achievable by interview alone.

What then should selectors be aiming to achieve in carrying through a selection procedure? McHenry (1981) sums it up by

saying "In effect what selectors are trying to do is predict the behaviour of each person in the range of situations that go to make up a particular occupation". Presumably in making that statement he is referring specifically to the occupation for which the candidate is being selected.

That being the case it is crucially important for the job description of the available post to be clearly documented and understood by those doing the assessing. In the words of Drucker(1985) "... there are only a few important steps to follow in making effective promotion and staffing decisions: 1) Think through the assignment. Job descriptions may last a long time .... but assignments change all the time and unpredictably ... each ... different assignment .... requires a different kind of person".

In many ways the views of Drucker are particularly pertinent to the police service in that many jobs within a particular rank require different qualities. Clearly the service's common practice has been to identify numerically the likely number of vacancies in any rank and to interview and select sufficient numbers to fill the projected vacancies. This may well have resulted in people being selected as suitable for promotion whilst not being suitable for the particular post to which they were eventually promoted. This practice is justified in the service by an adherence to a view that a police officer should be extremely flexible and able to adapt to whatever role is required

of him. Nevertheless current practice raises certain questions regarding whether the job descriptions of sergeants and inspectors, if such commodities exist, are sufficiently flexible to cater for the various roles which promoted officers may be required to fill.

Job analysis has often been discussed in a way which suggests that in the words of Prein (1977, p167) "any fool can do it". In reality methods are not available at a level of standardisation or sophistication to justify such a complacent approach. There are, however, a large number of systematic approaches to job analysis available. Stewart and Stewart's use of repertory grids plus questionnaire is a technique which has attracted recent interest.

Hemphill's executive position description questionnaire and Flannigan's critical incident technique both described by Jeswald (1977) are also widely used. (Many more are available but practitioners will be well advised, as advocated by Prein, to use them in the knowledge that a particular technique, applied in isolation, may have limitations in respect of a particular job, whereas utilisation of multiple techniques is more likely to produce reliable results.)

The job description having been established and understood by the assessors the next step is to put into practice a methodology for assessing the potential of candidates to effectively discharge

the tasks identified in the description. Thus the exercise is essentially one of identifying potential rather than rewarding past performance. Whilst past performance may give some indication of potential it should not be used as a comprehensive predictor. The dangers of relying on past performance as a criterion upon which to select for promotion are highlighted by Stewart and Stewart (1976) "There will be many cases where the employee's track record will not help much in predicting his performance in a higher job. Blind adherence to the track record is, of course, one of the organisational predispositions for becoming victim to the Peter principle where every employee is promoted to his level of incompetence. The difficulty of relying on track record for prediction becomes particularly acute at two stages in the typical organisation; first, at the transition from non-managerial job to managerial job and secondly, at the transfer from divisional responsibilities to general responsibilities...".

The rigid structure of the police service militates against consistently good performance receiving extra reward; pay scales are compartmentalised according to two criteria: rank attained and length of service within that rank allowing no scope to provide financial incentive other than through promotion.

This situation has undoubtedly led to officers being promoted as a reward for good performance rather than having been identified as having potential to perform well in the next rank.

Whilst in many instances officers may have been quite properly promoted despite incorrect selection criteria being applied, there have been numerous examples of "bad promotions"; these can take many forms, some are made on the basis of "it being an officers turn", others reflect a view of an officer adopted by his supervisor on the basis of criteria which have no relevance to selection. On the other hand, some promotions will be made on an honourable basis albeit the selectors have neither the expertise nor the systems in place to ensure that selection achieves its aims. Such promotions have led to officers becoming cynical about the system and have engendered distrust and frustration amongst individuals who have not been successful. Some might argue that these frustrations only affect a small proportion of officers, mainly those who desire promotion, and that consequently the effect on morale in general is minimal. However, recent work by Glowinkowski and Nicholson (1986) gives an indication that frustration may be more widespread.

Of the sample of officers studied only 8% had little interest in further promotion and particular comment was made that "most inspectors seemed amused at the apparent naivety of our interview question: "Given the opportunity of promotion would you accept it?" However, although promotion seems to be a "universal and almost obsessive" concern amongst the sample, perceptions of the likelihood of achieving further advancement are not so optimistic.

Only half expected to gain further promotion and 28% expected to have their desire for advancement frustrated. In this particular study three factors were perceived to be of particular importance in determining the likelihood of further promotion. They were: a) having experienced high mobility between jobs and functions in one's career; b) having spent time in C.I.D. (and conversely that long stretches in uniform patrol were disadvantageous); and c) age, that young officers chances of promotion were higher.

Whilst the study does not establish whether these perceptions are justified it is interesting to note that the first two relate to aspects of past performance whilst the third relates to a factor which has no real bearing on future potential.

When officers were questioned about their satisfaction with the promotion board system as it operates within their force 42% expressed dissatisfaction against only 35% who were satisfied (23% were neutral). In response to an open-ended question "Are there changes you would like to see in the promotion board system or how it operates?" Only 12% of respondents answered "No" and a further 7% failed to respond to the question. However, the remaining 83% had various and detailed comments mostly critical on the system. A number of the sentiments expressed are highly relevant: one inspector commented "Persons having appeared before boards should be made aware of weaknesses which can be strengthened to fit them for promotion. At present officers are left in the dark as to their future for two years. Then they are

required to apply again for a board, probably attending again with the same faults or weaknesses." Another said "There appears to be far too much importance placed on a 30 minutes interview by people who can condemn one's career despite suitability for promotion and a good track record."

Clearly this study draws into question the suitability of the promotion board system as a tool for selecting officers for advancement and gives an insight into the level of mistrust and dissatisfaction it can engender amongst police officers.

What then are the available methods by which potential can be identified and selection made more reliable and perhaps acceptable?

Miller (1981), quite correctly argues "Obviously there is no promotional screening process developed that can measure every relevant aspect of an individual's performance."

Accepting that no one test can achieve a "crystal ball image" of the potential of a candidate, there are a battery of exercises available which can test such wide-ranging areas as aptitude, personality, verbal reasoning, numerical reasoning, logical thinking, communication skills and a host more abilities which may be of relevance in selecting personnel for advancement. These areas can be probed by psychometric tests, group exercises, simulations, individual role plays, interviews and peer



assessments. Nevertheless, it must always be remembered that a measure of the validity of a selection system should not be based on the quantity of tests used or the variety of information gathered, but on the correlation between the areas of potential assessed and the job description of the post under consideration. Furthermore, if the system is to have credibility amongst the workforce and in turn their confidence, it must be consistent.

Clearly, the most well-known method of combining the tests and exercises mentioned above into a coherent personnel selection tool is the assessment centre.

According to Fletcher (1982), an assessment centre consists of "assessment of a group of individuals by a team of judges using a comprehensive and integrated series of techniques."

An attempt at an agreed definition of an assessment centre was made by practitioners in the United States (Task Force on Assessment Centre Standards, 1980). According to this definition: "The following are the essential elements which are necessary for a process to be considered an assessment centre.

Multiple assessment techniques must be used. At least one of these techniques must be a simulation. A simulation is an exercise or technique designed to elicit behaviours related to dimensions of performance on the job requiring the

participants to respond behaviourally to situational stimuli. The stimuli present in a simulation parallel or resemble stimuli in the work situation ...

Multiple assessors must be used. These assessors must receive thorough training prior to participation in a centre.

Judgements resulting in an outcome (i.e. recommendation for promotion, specific training or development) must be based on pooling information from assessors and techniques.

An overall evaluation of behaviour must be made by the assessors at a separate time from observation of behaviour during the exercises.

Simulation exercises are used. These exercises are developed to tap a variety of predetermined behaviours and have been pre-tested prior to use to ensure that the techniques provide reliable, objective and relevant behavioural information for the organisation in question. The simulations must be job-related.

The dimensions, attributes, characteristics, qualities, skills, abilities or knowledge evaluated by the assessment centre are determined by an analysis of relevant job behaviours.

The techniques used in the assessment centre are designed to provide information which is used in evaluating the dimensions, attributes or qualities previously determined."

The historical starting point of assessment centres is difficult to establish, although it is probable that they evolved in Germany prior to the Second World War as a method of selecting officers for the German Army. (Farago 1972). From that starting point they were introduced into the United Kingdom in the form of the War Office Selection Board which was in turn the forerunner of the Civil Service selection Board. In the United States, assessment centres were also born in military circles. Secret agents during the Second World War were selected by the Office of Strategic Studies using assessment centre techniques. Later, after the war, in the 50s and 60s, American Telephone and Telegraph set the standard for widespread application of assessment centre techniques in both the private and public sector.

Within the British police service the "extended interview" has been widely used as a selection tool in the identification of young officers of exceptional potential to undergo training for accelerated promotion and also in the identification of more senior officers to be trained to fill the most senior positions in the police service.

The psychologists employed in operating this process, evaluating its predictive validity and continuing its 'rationalisation' work closely with the Civil Service Selection Board (CISBY) and have often previously had experience within that organisation.

Recent work by Feltham (1986) has examined the validity of the police extended interview system and has cast doubt over its effectiveness in achieving its aims. He comments "In summary, the central conclusion of the present study is that EI OAR (Final mark) has some small validity in relation to a job performance criterion for the special course successful candidates. However, no such validity has been determined for other types of criteria (training and rank) or for graduate entrants. Relatively low validity overall is interpreted principally in terms of the apparent lack of job-relatedness of parts of the EI procedure, but also in terms of possible insensitivity of the training performance measures used, inefficiencies in EI decision-making, range restriction and, in the case of graduate entrants, small sample size. Inefficiencies in decision-making appear to stem in particular from over-emphasis on interviews and the written appreciation and neglect of peer nominations and in general, from the use of clinical/judgemental as opposed to mechanical means of combining EI information. Overall, it seems that EIs should be reviewed with regard to the possibilities of reducing the number of interviews in the procedure, reviewing/replacing component techniques in relation to external validity and job analysis information, and introducing a mechanical element into

decision-making, provided this could be made acceptable to AC users."

Whilst it has to be accepted that Feltham's work does cast doubts over the validity of police extended interviews and recommends some changes in format to make it more effective, there is widespread feeling in the service that the current format is infinitely more reliable in coming to selection decisions than the simple board or face to face interview.

Assuming that there is some merit in an assessment centre approach and that it offers the prospect of more precise identification of potential, there remains the task of promoting confidence in the system amongst the workforce. To an extent this problem will solve itself, in that accurate selection decisions and staff confidence in the system are inextricably linked, progress on one front normally leading to progress on the other. Nevertheless, it could almost be regarded as complacent not to explore the options which may be available to further underpin employee support and peace of mind. The work of Glowinkowski and Nicholson (1986) produced evidence of officers dissatisfaction with not being told of their strengths and weaknesses and not being counselled on how to make progress. One officer commented "I strongly maintain that there is an important argument for officers to be given feedback information on the general views of the board. If good a man should know not to become complacent; if bad a man should be advised of his problem

areas, together with training or "roastings" to help rectify if considered necessary. The problem with the police service today as I see it is that we are not professional enough, a fact corroborated by the point that the majority of officers (inspectors and above) do not like pointing out a man's "bad points" on his appraisal form mainly due to eyeball confrontation at interviews." Another expressed similar sentiment saying "I don't know why I am an inspector or what to do to get further" and followed it by adding "my only feedback when a constable was not being sacked. I do not know how I'm doing in my present rank; I think I might get higher but I don't really know."

Clearly sentiments of this nature in an organisation where rank is so important produce a breeding ground for discontent and develop a climate in which rumour and innuendo regarding the criteria necessary for success flourish.

And so to summarise, current thinking on selection seems to advocate the use of some form of assessment centre; it highlights the pitfalls of placing great reliance on using the interview alone and acknowledges the need to engender confidence in whatever system is adopted, amongst the workforce.

This short review has touched on only a small sample of the research which has been undertaken regarding selection techniques. It has concentrated on the selection interview, its validity and the alternatives to its use. However, it has

revealed that research regarding interviewee's perceptions of selection systems is relatively uncommon and, in particular, that only limited attention has been paid to the affect these perceptions have on organisational effectiveness.

Before considering a methodology by which this apparent shortcoming can be addressed, it is first necessary to get a feel for the South Wales Constabulary and to understand fully the promotion selection system it operates.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOUTH WALES CONSTABULARY AND ITS  
PROMOTION SELECTION SYSTEM



The South Wales Constabulary is one of the 43 police forces in England and Wales. It is responsible for policing the three counties of South, Mid and West Glamorgan. During 1987 the force had 106,420 crimes reported to it, of which 41,915 were detected, a detection rate of 39.39%. The force is responsible for policing a road system which in total extends to 5683.17 miles and on that system, during 1987, officers dealt with 72 fatal road accidents involving the death of 79 people and 4,560 personal injury accidents involving injury to 5,857 individuals. In addition to these major commitments to crime and road traffic 74,185 offences in relation to the use or condition of motor vehicles were pursued during the year and 76,489 fixed penalty tickets issued. Additionally 4,931 deaths were investigated, 43,601 warrants handled, 27,415 reports taken of property lost, 18,932 reports taken of property found, and 6,810 stray dogs seized.

These statistics give something of the flavour of the South Wales Constabulary. They highlight the workload of the organisation and give a clue to the level of sophistication to which the force has had to aspire. Gone are the days of the "Dixon of Dock Green" image, albeit that close liaison with the community remains a priority. The current demands on the force preclude officers being able to approach their daily work in the same relaxed and unhurried manner as that portrayed by the affable television characters. The modern South Wales Constabulary officer operates in a climate of advanced technology, with many

of the tools of his trade being no different from those used by professionals in other walks of life. Computers are common place, word processors abound and the use of modern high frequency communication systems means that all officers are in contact with their stations or operations rooms at all times, making them readily available to be deployed to any of the 1,267 incidents which on average occur daily.

How then is the Force organised to deal with a workload of this level? The 556012 acres of the Force are divided into eight territorial divisions each headed by a Chief Superintendent. Each division is responsible for the day to day policing demands of its area and they vary in size from 113,112 acres to 9001 acres and in population concentration from 243,147 to 114,700.

The manpower of individual divisions varies from 462 to 169 police officers, although the manpower of an individual division is not directly linked to its geographical size. Over and above the disposition of personnel in territorial divisions there is a Headquarters Division which deals with matters of policy and administration and also a number of specialist departments ranging from Communications to Traffic which are intended to provide support for the territorial divisions.

Clearly, with such a large amount of personnel spread over a wide area and employed upon relatively diverse tasks, the problems of personnel management are considerable. Whilst day to day

personnel problems are most commonly dealt with on a divisional or departmental basis the important decisions about promotion have both a divisional and headquarters element included in them. This research is primarily concerned with the first stage which occurs in divisions. However, before going into detail it is first necessary to give an overview of the whole promotion system, and its statutory basis as it relates to officers aspiring to the rank of sergeant and inspector.

Promotion in the police service up to the rank of inspector is nationally governed by Statutory Instruments (S.I.) made by the Home Secretary in exercise of the powers conferred by S.33 of the Police Act 1964, after consulting the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales in accordance with S.46(3) of that Act as amended by S.4(6) of the Police Act 1969. Those currently in force are the Police (Promotion) Regulations 1979, S.I. 1979/991, as amended by the Police (Promotion) (Amendment) Regulations 1981, S.I. 1981/919 and 1982, S.I. 1982/1602.

It must be understood that whilst examination success is a pre-requisite for promotion up to the rank of inspector, it is by no means a sufficient condition. Up to that rank examination success determines eligibility for promotion. Promotion itself is awarded on the basis of selection and beyond inspector is determined solely by this criterion (Reg.5). Whilst the Regulations are precise regarding syllabus, management and candidature requirements for the examinations they offer no guidance on selection criteria or procedures.

The provisions dealing with the qualifying examinations are set out in Reg.3(1) and the Schedule to the Regulations. The examinations are held at least once every year under arrangements approved by the examinations board appointed by the Home Secretary for the purpose of the Regulations. The syllabuses are prepared by the board in consultation with the Local Government Training Board (LGTB) or such other body or persons as may be appointed by the Home Secretary for the purposes of the Regulations. The syllabus covers criminal law, evidence and procedure in criminal courts, the structure of local and central government in relation to the administration of police forces, and police powers and duties and related procedure.

The examination papers are set and marked, under arrangements made by the LGTB, by examiners appointed by them with the approval of the examinations board. In consultation with the LGTB, the examinations board is required to determine the standard to be achieved by a candidate in order to obtain a pass in any examination or in any particular paper and the circumstances in which a candidate may obtain a pass in any examination, notwithstanding that he has not obtained a pass in some paper comprised in that examination, by obtaining a pass in that paper in a subsequent examination.

To qualify for promotion to sergeant a constable must: (a) have obtained a pass in the qualifying examination for promotion to sergeant; (b) have completed two years' service; and (c) have

completed his probationary service: Reg 4(1). A constable is eligible to sit the examination having completed two years' service and probationary service at the date of the examination: Schedule; para 5(1). Under Reg 15 of the Police Regulations 1971, S.I 1971/156, constables are required to be on probation for the first two years of their service. Where, however, they have served on probation for a period of not less than a year following a previous appointment to that or any other police force, they must be on probation for their first year in the force in which they are presently serving unless the chief officer of police in his discretion reduces the period of probation, in which case the aggregate period must not be less than two years. Alternatively probation under the present appointment may be dispensed with altogether if probation had been completed under the previous appointment. In view of the discretionary provisions for reduction, constables who transferred forces in the early stages of their career could in theory have found themselves serving a probationary period somewhat in excess of the minimum two years overall. To ameliorate their position a proviso to Schedule para 5(1) of the 1979 Regulations was added by Reg 2(f) of the 1981 Amendment Regulations according to which constables who have completed the required period of probation under a previous appointment to the current or any other police force are eligible to take the sergeants' examination, notwithstanding they have not completed their current probationary service. This would appear to bear the consequence that where a constable had served less than the

requisite two years' probation under a previous appointment and under this new appointment has not been awarded full credit for the earlier probationary period so as to permit completion of probation after a minimum in total of two years, that officer must serve till the end of probation before the candidature entitlement arises.

To qualify for promotion to inspector a sergeant must: (a) have obtained a pass in the qualifying examination for promotion to inspector; and (b) have completed two years' service in the rank of sergeant: Reg 4(2). A member of a police force who has obtained a pass in the qualifying examination for promotion to sergeant is eligible to take the qualifying examination for promotion to inspector upon completion of not less than five years' service or one year's service in the rank of sergeant on the date the examination is held: Schedule para 5(2).

Having emphasised that a pass in the qualifying examination only satisfies the sufficiency condition for promotion to sergeant or inspector, how are candidates actually selected? Clearly systems vary from force to force, although the common denominator is the use of the promotion board interview. The South Wales Constabulary uses the promotion board system on a two-tier level for sergeant and inspector selection. From time to time, when projected wastage dictates, applications are invited from qualified officers who wish to be considered for promotion. For those officers aspiring to the rank of sergeant eligibility is

dependent on having passed the promotion qualifying examination and having completed two years' service. For those aspiring to the inspector rank, eligibility is dependant on having served two years in the rank of sergeant and having passed the promotion qualifying examination to inspector.

Each applicant for promotion appears initially before his own divisional promotion board. Each of these will be chaired by a Chief Superintendent from another Division or Department. The composition of the board will vary according to the candidate appearing. The visiting Chief Superintendent will sit on all interviews. He will always be accompanied by the Deputy Divisional Commander of the host division, a Superintendent. The third board member will be either another Superintendent or a Chief Inspector, dependent upon the type of work the candidate is employed upon. In those instances where the candidate is a Sub-Divisional uniformed officer his Sub-Divisional Commander will occupy the third place on the board. If he works in a large Sub-Division this officer will be a Superintendent, in smaller Sub-Divisions, the Commander will be a Chief Inspector. Where the candidate is a Divisional C.I.D. officer the third place on the board will be taken by his Detective Chief Inspector. Other permutations take place where candidates work in smaller more specialist departments and whilst it is not possible to list each of the possibilities, it is true to say that the third place on a Divisional Promotion Board will always be taken by a Superintendent/Chief Inspector who is directly responsible for the day to day work of the candidate.

Each board will take place at a Divisional Police Station, last for something between 30 and 45 minutes and board members will have in front of them the last 3 staff appraisals of the candidate, together with his application for promotion. The staff appraisals contain assessments made by the officer's line managers and his Divisional Commander on his work performance over the year to which the appraisal relates. They do not contain recommendations on suitability for promotion. The promotion application form contains basic personal details of the candidate, together with any information the candidate wishes to include regarding his policing experience, special qualifications he feels he holds, and his outside interests. It will also contain a confidential assessment of the candidate's suitability for promotion.

At the conclusion of each interview a discussion takes place upon the candidate's suitability for promotion and a grading is established. The grading awarded will be in the following range:

- A+           = Recommended as an outstanding candidate
- A            = Recommended as a strong candidate
- A-           = Recommended as an acceptable candidate
  
- B+ )        = Recommended for further consideration
- B    )       = with varying degrees of confidence,
- B-   )       = not meriting an A grading.
  
- C           = Not recommended



However, this grading may be altered later by the Chief Superintendent (Board Chairman) after having seen all candidates and without reference to other board members. (In practice, consultation with other board members nearly always takes place prior to a grade being altered.) Divisional grading having been established for all candidates, the Board Chairman forwards the results to the Chief Constable's Office. There, a decision is made about which of the candidates is to be called forward for further consideration by the Headquarters Promotion Board. Clearly, this decision will be influenced by the projected number of vacancies which are likely to occur. However, more often than not, those officers graded A+ and A are called forward.

The composition of the Headquarters Promotion Board varies according to the rank under consideration. Where officers are aspiring to the sergeant rank the Board consists of an Assistant Chief Constable and a Chief Superintendent. Where the board is considering officers for the rank of Inspector, the board consists of the Deputy Chief Constable and a Chief Superintendent. However, the composition of the Board remains constant for all candidates. In either case the Chief Superintendent involved may have already participated in the Divisional selection procedure. Each Headquarters Promotion Board interview takes place at the Headquarters complex and lasts for something between 30 and 45 minutes. Board members have in front of them the candidate's last three staff appraisals, the candidate's application for promotion, a report by the

candidate's Divisional Commander on his suitability for promotion, together with a Divisional Board assessment and grading.

At the conclusion of each Headquarters Board interview, discussion takes place regarding the candidate's suitability for promotion and a final grading is established. Dependent upon the projected number of vacancies, an appropriate number of officers with the highest grades will receive a letter from the Chief Constable telling them that, subject to continued satisfactory service, they will be promoted as and when a suitable vacancy becomes available. Those who are unsuccessful are at liberty to re-apply for promotion, as are those who failed to reach the Headquarters Board, when applications are next invited.

What then are the criticisms of the current system? Clearly, the sufficiency condition imposed by the qualifying examination could be and has been, singled out for comment on the basis that policing is essentially a practical activity whilst the examination is predominantly a test of theoretical knowledge. The content of the examination is currently receiving some attention with a view to making it more closely aligned with day to day policing and incorporating in it some aspect of measurement of personal qualities. However, irrespective of whether changes are made, it is unlikely that the police service will abandon the use of some form of sufficiency condition to screen out officers who are regarded as not worthy of consideration for promotion.

Whilst criticism can be levelled at the promotion examination, it would appear that far greater scope exists for the finger of suspicion to be pointed at the selection aspects of the promotion system and in particular, as far as the South Wales Constabulary is concerned, at the arrangements which currently prevail for officers to be considered at Divisional Board level. Comment has already been made regarding the low predictive validity of the selection interview. Nevertheless, the Divisional Board system remains a classic example, similar to many others throughout the public and private sector, of its continued use. Irrespective of other selection systems being guilty by association, the existing Divisional Board is a manifestation of many of the potential failings of a selection system based upon a selection interview; the interviewers are untrained in personnel interviewing; the composition of boards provides scope for the job description of the post for which selection is taking place, if one is formulated, to vary from division to division according to the stereotypes of board members and in particular, the Board Chairman; there is no organisational mechanism through which candidates can be apprised of their interview performance and acquainted with the weaknesses which the board perceived as making them unsuitable for further consideration. This lack of feedback creates a breeding-ground for supposition, both about one's own weaknesses and also about one's successful competitors' strengths. Such a situation can lead to frustration amongst candidates and when coupled with the other weaknesses, to the suspicion that the system fails to meet its objective of identifying those most suitable for promotion.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The lack of feedback also inevitably leads to unsuccessful candidates endeavouring to eliminate those aspects of their performance which they perceive as having been instrumental in their failure. They also attempt to acquire those skills and abilities which they perceive as having ensured their competitors' success. Often, neither course of action will ensure future success since the assumptions upon which the changes were made were initially wrong. Furthermore, the probability is that the next Divisional Promotion Board will involve different assessors with different perspectives, resulting in the "goal posts" against which success is measured, having moved.

Many of the criticisms about the Divisional Board are equally applicable to the HQ Board. However, it has been decided to concentrate on the Divisional Board since at least the subjective judgements made by board members at HQ are likely to be consistent whilst scope exists for them to be diverse amongst the Divisional Boards. Furthermore, whilst an analysis of the HQ Board is beyond the scope of this work, it is also somewhat irrelevant since the intention of the research is to identify the criteria which are applied at Divisional Board level, illustrate that they vary according to the selectors involved, and show that candidates' perceptions of the criteria which determine success are at variance with those which actually apply.

Clearly, to fully understand what is actually happening at a divisional board and to establish whether the criticisms made of it are valid, it is necessary to elicit the actual criteria which are applied by assessors to determine success. Also, in order to test if these criteria correlate with candidates' perceptions of what determines success, it is equally necessary to accurately establish the criteria which candidates perceive as being crucial to success or failure.

In the case of the assessors, it is of importance to establish as closely as possible the criteria applied in practice rather than those which assessors know ought to be applied; a proportion of assessors are well acquainted with the jargon of modern management theory and equally adept at trotting out lists of idealistic qualities associated with suitability for advancement. Nevertheless, it does not necessarily follow that they rely on an assessment of these qualities when deciding upon a candidate's suitability for promotion. Equally, candidates are often reticent about voicing their true opinions on a topic of such crucial importance to their future. Understandably, some feel that a proportion of their views could be seen as criticisms of senior officers which in turn may jeopardise their chances of promotion.

The problem is thus one of extracting information from individuals without them having the opportunity to refine their responses so as to conceal the truth of what is actually happening, or believed to be happening.

The method chosen to achieve this goal was the same for both the criteria applied by assessors and the candidates' perceptions of those criteria. It involved the use of repertory grid analysis and questionnaires.

Before going further in a description of the methodology adopted, it is necessary to digress to an explanation of repertory grid analysis.

George Kelly, in 1955, published a work called "The Psychology of Personal Constructs" which was the forerunner of all modern repertory grid techniques. In the work, he introduced what has come to be known as his "role construct repertory test". The test was designed, "to elicit a representative sample of those constructs upon which an individual customarily relies to interpret and predict the behaviour of significant people in his life and to assess the way in which he relates these constructs to one another". (Adams - Webber, 1976, p20). Clearly, to understand the above quotation requires a further explanation of "constructs".

"A construct is a way in which some things are seen as being alike, yet different from others. A construct is therefore essentially a two-ended affair involving a particular basis for considering likeness and differences and at the same time for excluding certain things as irrelevant to the contrast involved." (Bannister and Mair, 1968, p25.) A construct is very different from a concept. A concept is normally described as a basis for grouping together certain things and distinguishing them from everything else. Black and white are two concepts and not aspects of one distinction. Black can only be contrasted with not black, and white with not white. The notions of contrast and range of applicability are alien to concepts but are essential to the definition of a construct. A statement that a person is 'hard' would be meaningless and useless if something were not negated at the same time. Different people may involve different contrasts: one may contrast hard with soft, another hard with caring, another hard with sensitivity; in each individual case the basis of discrimination can only be understood when the nature of the contrast is clear. Individuals may also have different ranges of use for constructs. Some will limit the construct 'hard-soft' to characteristics of people's behaviour, others may extend it to levels of comfort, others to degrees of simplicity etc. Thus individuals may apply similar discriminations but within various ranges.



"A construct is thus explicitly a tool to allow not only discrimination and organisation of events but also the anticipation of future possibilities." (Ibid, p26.) For example, the use of the construct 'hard-soft' to order certain experiences with people does not merely allow person A to be categorised hard and person B as soft. By describing A as hard, we immediately imply a number of predictions about his behaviour in relation to ourselves and others. We may expect A to be fit and muscular, to be emotionally strong in a distressing situation, to be uncaring about the feelings of others. Whereas we may expect B to be physically weak and puny, to be unable to cope with stress, to be the subject of intimidation. All these subordinate constructions are anticipations derived from the original construct 'hard-soft'. These anticipations do not just occur, they derive from the construct system operated by the individual and illustrate the interlinkage between constructs that can occur. Constructs do not exist in isolation, they are linked to other constructs in a coherent and orderly manner. Individuals have different single constructs and also different ways of inter-relating constructs one with another.

In the promotion selection procedure, one construct for example 'wide experience - limited experience' will have very different meanings amongst different assessors. One assessor may measure experience in terms of years of service, regarding an officer with 15 years in the police as being widely experienced, irrespective of examining what he has actually done during the 15 years.

Another may regard an officer with 6 years' service, 2 of which have been in uniformed operations, 2 in the C.I.D. and 2 in the traffic department as widely experienced. A third may regard the officer described above with 15 years' service as being limited in experience because of having performed all his duty in one sub-division in uniform. Thus, the construct used as an example can have many different interpretations, albeit the concept of experience is something which is undoubtedly of relevance in the promotion selection procedure.

In trying to establish exactly what is occurring during the promotion selection procedure it is clearly relevant to draw out as many of the constructs which are at play as possible. How, then, can this be achieved? In Kelly's original role construct repertory test which, it must be remembered, was produced primarily to assist with the assessment of individuals in clinical settings, each subject is first shown a standard list of brief 'role titles' such as 'your father', 'your boss', 'the person with whom you feel least comfortable', 'a person you have met recently whom you would like to get to know better' and asked to nominate for each of them 'that individual personally known to you who seems to fit it best'. The name of each person nominated by the subject is recorded on a separate card together with a corresponding role title (the same person can only be nominated once). Next, a triad of these figures is presented to the subject and he is asked to think of some important way in which two of these three persons are similar to one another and

different from the third. Whatever the subject states to be the basis of perceived similarity and contrast is recorded verbatim as a single bipolar construct, for example 'reserved outgoing'. A series of such triads preselected so that all figures are used an approximately equal number of times is used to elicit 20 or 30 bipolar constructs from each subject. This procedure is referred to as Kelly's "method of triads". Kelly assumes that the constructs which are elicited from a person by means of his method of triads constitute a representative sample of those dimensions which he uses to construe his own behaviour and that of other important people in his life.

Similarly, constructs can be elicited by Kelly's method of triads in relation to particular functions outside the normal social environment. His method has been widely extended to the field of occupational psychology for use in analysing management practices, relationships between workers and bosses and a wide variety of other procedures where an understanding of what is actually occurring is fundamental to effective change being introduced.

In this particular research, it is essential to establish as closely as possible what is actually occurring within the selection process and so Kelly's method of triads has been used to elicit the constructs at play. Repertory grid analysis goes further than the description given above and provides a tool for statistically analysing the personal constructs of individuals in

relation to a variety of activities. However, for the purpose of this work its usefulness extends to the drawing out of constructs from which questionnaires can be formulated which in turn gauge the extent to which assessors and candidates favour one extreme of a particular bipolar construct as opposed to the other.

It was decided to split the data-gathering aspect of the research into two distinct areas; the study of the divisional board as it operates when selecting sergeants to become inspectors and separately, the study of the board as it operates when selecting constables to become sergeants. In both cases, the perceptions of candidates participating in the boards were also studied. The sergeant to inspector board was looked at first.

Ideally, it would have been nice to have conducted the research fairly quickly after the completion of a set of divisional boards. However, the projected timetable of events precluded this in the case of the sergeant to inspector board and by necessity data collection related to the last sitting of the board, which had taken place some time previously.

Initially, 5 chief superintendents who had chaired individual divisional boards were asked to co-operate by participating in repertory grid analysis of what had occurred at their boards. Each was asked to focus upon 9 candidates whom they had interviewed at the last board in the proportion 5 successful to 4 unsuccessful, or vice versa. The identity of the candidates was

not divulged and the analysis took place with each being given a number. Each chief superintendent was asked in turn to consider 3 of the candidates he had chosen and to identify something common to 2 of them but different in the third in terms of their suitability for promotion. The process was repeated according to a predetermined sequence until 9 sub-groups of 3 candidates had been considered. At the conclusion of the analysis, in each case the chief superintendent was asked if there were any further criteria which he felt had been considered by the divisional board which had not emerged during the repertory grid analysis. In the case of a positive reply, the details were noted.

When all the interviews were complete, a list was compiled of all the constructs which had been mentioned. From the list, a questionnaire was formulated in which each of the constructs was expressed in a statement which could either be agreed with or disagreed with in varying degrees, on a 5-point scale.

Some considerable thought was given to the extent to which the questionnaires should be circulated; should their distribution be limited to officers who had actually participated as assessors in the last divisional boards or should a wider distribution be undertaken in which all officers of the ranks of chief superintendent, superintendent and chief inspector were targeted? In the final analysis the latter course of action was preferred for a number of reasons; firstly, the validity of the

results would be enhanced by a larger sample; secondly, all officers of these ranks either have been or are likely to be assessors at divisional promotion boards; thirdly, blanket distribution avoided any suggestion of selectivity of participants who might be pre-disposed to respond in a particular way.

The decision having been made, 119 questionnaires were distributed. Each questionnaire contained 19 statements and gave instructions to the effect that the statements should be considered in relation to their validity in terms of selecting sergeants to become inspectors. The only item of identification requested was the rank of the respondent. It was felt that this information would be useful in considering whether attitudes varied according to rank. At the end of the questionnaire scope was provided for respondents to comment on any criteria which they felt influential in the promotion selection process which had not been covered in the statements. Respondents were positively encouraged to comment within this section.

Next, attention was turned to identifying the perceptions of sergeants who had participated in the last divisional board as to what assessors were seeking in successful candidates.

The process was begun by interviewing 12 candidates, some of whom had been successful and others unsuccessful, using the repertory grid technique. To ensure that interviewees were able to give valid judgements on what in their view had determined success and

failure, it was necessary to confine these initial interviews to one division of the force. The decision to limit the repertory grid analysis to one division meant that those taking part could talk with some authority about their perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of their colleagues against whom they had competed at the last board. To have selected sergeants at random from around the force would have inevitably resulted in views being conceptual rather than based upon a good working knowledge of both successful and unsuccessful candidates.

Each interviewee in turn was asked to focus upon his competitors at the last divisional promotion board and to select 5 who had been successful and 4 who had been unsuccessful, or vice versa. In each case it was suggested that the whole process might be enhanced if the competitors chosen were individuals who the interviewee knew fairly well in terms of their strengths and weaknesses and suitability for promotion. The 9 having been chosen and identified by number only, the interviewee was asked to consider 3 of the sergeants he had chosen and to identify something common to 2 but lacking in the third in terms of their suitability for promotion. The process was repeated according to a pre-determined sequence until 9 sub-groups of 3 candidates had been considered. At the conclusion of the repertory grid analysis, each interviewee was asked if there were any criteria which had not been mentioned, which he felt had an influence upon the success or failure of a candidate at a divisional promotion board. Criteria mentioned were noted.

At the conclusion of the interviews, a list was compiled of all the constructs mentioned and a questionnaire formulated. Each questionnaire contained 29 statements, each based upon a construct that had been mentioned. The questionnaires were distributed to every sergeant in the force who appeared before the last divisional promotion board with the request that they rank each statement on a 5-point scale according to whether they agreed or disagreed with it. In addition to ranking the statements, respondents were also asked to detail any criteria they felt influential in the promotion selection process which had not been dealt with in the questionnaire. The only further information requested from respondents was an intimation as to whether they had been successful at the last divisional promotion board.

The process in respect of sergeants aspiring to the inspector rank having been concluded in terms of data collection, attention was turned to divisional promotion boards for constables aspiring to the sergeant rank.

Luckily, the difficulty of gathering data whilst it was fresh did not occur in this aspect of the research as it had done in the earlier work. Promotion boards for constables were announced during the course of the research thereby affording an opportunity for divisional board chairmen (chief superintendents) to be approached prior to conducting their boards, and asked to participate in the project. This enabled them to retain all their notes and other documentation appertaining to the board.



That having been done, quickly after the divisional boards had been concluded, interviews were conducted with 6 board chairmen using repertory grid analysis to elicit a set of constructs which had a bearing upon success or failure. At each interview, as previously, each chief superintendent was asked to focus upon 5 officers who had appeared before him successfully and 4 who had appeared before him unsuccessfully, or vice versa. The identity of the 9 chosen candidates was not revealed, each only being given a number. According to a pre-determined sequence, each chief superintendent was asked to group 3 of the candidates he had chosen and to identify something common to 2 of them and missing in the third in terms of their suitability for promotion. The grouping into threes was conducted 9 times at the conclusion of which the chief superintendents were asked if there were any other criteria not mentioned which may have been influential in determining success or failure. Any comments made were noted. As before, all the constructs were listed and a questionnaire compiled in which each construct was incorporated into a statement which could either be agreed with or disagreed with, with varying degrees of confidence, according to a 5-point scale.

The questionnaires were distributed to all officers of the force of chief superintendent, superintendent and chief inspector rank, with a request that they rank the statements in the context of them relating to constables seeking to become sergeants. Each questionnaire was anonymous save for respondents being asked to

reveal their rank to allow for comparisons across rank boundaries. At the end of the questionnaire a section was included which encouraged respondents to comment on any criteria they felt influential in the selection procedure which had not been dealt with in the questionnaire.

The final element of the data collection concerned the perceptions of the constables who appeared before the last Divisional Board as to what determined success. To get at these, 15 officers from one division of the force who had appeared before the board were interviewed, using repertory grid analysis. As with the sergeants, the decision to limit the interviewing to one division was taken on the basis that authoritative information could only be obtained from officers if they were basing their perceptions upon officers whom they knew well in terms of policing ability and suitability for promotion.

In a similar manner to that adopted earlier, each constable was asked in turn to focus upon 5 of his competitors at the last board who had been successful and 4 who had been unsuccessful, or vice versa. It was suggested to them that in coming to their choice, the usefulness of the information they provided could be maximised if they picked individuals whom they knew best and upon whose abilities and strengths they felt most able to comment. The identity of the officers chosen was not divulged, each only being given a number. Once again, each interviewee was asked to consider 3 candidates at a time according to a pre-determined

sequence and to comment upon a quality possessed by two of them but missing in the third in terms of their suitability for promotion. The groupings were altered 9 times and at the conclusion of the interview the officer was asked to identify any further criteria not already mentioned which he felt influential in determining success or failure. All comments made were noted.

At the conclusion of all the interviews, the criteria mentioned were listed and a questionnaire compiled containing a statement in relation to each construct mentioned which respondents were asked to rank in terms of agreement or disagreement according to a 5-point scale.

The questionnaire also encouraged respondents to comment upon any other criteria they felt influential in the selection process which had not been mentioned.

Questionnaires were distributed to all officers of the force who appeared before the most recent divisional promotion board for constables. They were anonymous save for respondents being asked to indicate whether or not they had been successful at the board.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS – ASSESSORS' VIEWS

In Chapter one, Webers' analytical concepts of power, authority and bureaucracy were discussed. He defined power as, "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which the probability rests." In short, he saw power as the ability to get one's way - even if it is based on bluff. He subdivided power and authority into three classifications, traditional authority, rational authority and charismatic authority.

Traditional authority is that which is exercised upon the basis of custom. It is engrained in society on the basis of status, inheritance or personal affection. It is epitomised by loyalty, and the sanctity of traditions. In essence, it is authority based upon habit which has 'inherent and unassailable wisdom.' However, in many respects it is totally irrational.

Rational authority on the other hand, is based upon predetermined and agreed goals and rules. It recognises the legitimacy of those elevated to authority to issue commands, aimed at achieving the goals. Such legitimacy is based on a belief that those who have been elevated, have achieved their positions because of 'professional qualifications' which particularly equip them for the role they are expected to play. It relies on the reduction of the influence of friendship, nepotism and other factors which dominate traditional authority. It seeks to base decisions upon

the achievement of organisational goals and to minimise the influence of irrelevant criteria.

Charismatic authority is that possessed by an individual who can wield great influence over others. It rests on a devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual. It is fairly rarely found, but tends to manifest itself in the special qualities of leadership which in the past have been exhibited by such diverse characters as Jesus, Napoleon, Hitler and Martin Luther King. In many respects Charismatic authority will have little part to play in analysing the results of this study, since it is a concept which is limited to individuals and one which is unlikely to be recognisable in an anonymous survey of the type which has been conducted. Nevertheless, where appropriate, its influence will be discussed and it is worth noting that the concept was considered in questionnaire 2, but not queried in any way.

For Weber, the bureaucratic organisation is the perfect example of rationality. He maintained that "bureaucracy is the most functionally efficient form of organisation, even though it can sometimes operate in a rather 'inhuman' way." (Max Weber - Economy and Society.) He constructed what he saw as an ideal type of bureaucracy and defined the characteristics it should contain. These are listed in Chapter 1 and suffice it say here, police forces come somewhere near this type. That being so, and bearing in mind Weber's view of bureaucracy being the perfect

example of rationality, one of the primary aims of this analysis will be to examine the extent to which rationality is applied within the police bureaucracy, in the context of promotion selection. Inevitably this will also involve an examination of the extent to which it is absent from the selection system and replaced by traditional authority. Before looking in detail at the data derived from the questionnaires, it is worth remembering that the statements contained in them were based upon criteria which were introduced by assessors and candidates who were interviewed using repertory grid techniques at the questionnaire formulation stage of the research. None of the statements are based upon criteria which were introduced by the author.

That being so, it is interesting to look at some of the criteria which were included and to decide if they themselves indicate particular types of Weberian power or authority. For ease of reference, the questionnaires will be referred to throughout by number as follows:-

Number One - Assessor's views of criteria under consideration at Divisional Promotion Boards for Sergeants seeking promotion to Inspector.

Number Two - Candidates perceptions of criteria under consideration at Divisional Promotion Boards for Sergeants seeking promotion to Inspector.

Number Three - Assessors views of criteria under consideration at Divisional Promotion Boards for Constables seeking promotion to Sergeant.

Number Four - Candidates perceptions of criteria under consideration at Divisional Promotion Boards for Constables seeking promotion to Sergeant.

Statements 5, 9, 15 and 19 on questionnaire one and statements 2, 4, 13, 15, 16, 19 and 27 on questionnaire 3 deal with the concepts of confidence, determination, enthusiasm, maturity, ability to get on with others, leadership skills, self confidence, and application. (Some of the concepts mentioned on questionnaire one are repeated on questionnaire three.)

What were assessors alluding to when they introduced these concepts? Did they really think a promotion selection board offered an opportunity for them to be assessed? In fact, did they seriously think that consistent interpretation of these concepts was possible amongst assessors who hold diverse views on what they mean? It is probable that the officers who introduced them never gave these questions a second thought. Instead, they described the differences between officers in terms of their



suitability for promotion by using words they had regularly heard used, or perhaps used themselves, in a promotion context; words which have become synonymous with promotion boards; words which have become traditional.

In reality, the promotion board probably offers next to no opportunity for these criteria to be identified or measured. Furthermore, they are concepts which would tend to be interpreted differently between assessors. However, even though they appear traditional, the reliance placed upon them is somewhat understandable.

The basis of this is probably to be found in the conservative nature of the police service. Change is something which occurs slowly. Experienced officers are inclined to remain loyal to tried and tested procedures which have stood the test of time, rather than introduce innovative ideas which may fail. That is not to say new methods are never introduced, it merely serves to indicate that caution is the watch word when something new is mooted. Working in such an environment tends to inculcate in an officer a belief in the status quo, a feeling that what he is doing is right and cannot be improved. In such a climate, it is understandable and rational for officers, when asked about promotion, to mention concepts which have become engrained in the vocabulary of police promotion, without addressing much thought to whether they really have a part to play.

However, evidence of the extent to which these concepts have become customary is to be found in an analysis of the data collected in relation to the statements. Almost without exception, a majority of respondents agreed or partially agreed that candidates who satisfy a promotion board they possess the qualities mentioned are more likely to pass a board than candidates who do not. For the reasons mentioned above, this stance is irrational, but probably based upon what has become a customary and traditional viewpoint.

What further evidence is there of traditionalism? Let us first look at questionnaire one.

It is not uncommon for people in all sorts of social situations to base their assessments of others on first impressions. Similarly, it is not uncommon for those assessments to be inaccurate. Police Officers are not exceptions in this respect and may, for the reasons given below, be even more likely to be influenced by first impressions.

The Police Service, being a uniformed and disciplined service, instills in its officers, over time, an appreciation of good bearing and smart appearance. Nevertheless, an extremely smart upright and well turned out constable is of little use if he does not have ability to support his physical appearance. The fact that the police culture tends to produce in officers a predisposition to admire smartness and good bearing, may over

emphasize the importance of these qualities at the expense of others which are, in fact, of greater importance. Against this background, it was not surprising that first impressions were introduced in statement one. Predominantly, assessors agreed that first impressions are important; a traditional response which was to be expected. However, when examined critically, these responses indicate irrationality in that they fail to take account of the fallibility of first impressions and confirm the use of a selection criterion which is completely subjective and probably irrelevant. What's more the veracity of the data from statement one is called into question by the data from statement 8. Clearly, if first impressions are influential, then it is reasonable to expect that officers who look like Police Inspectors would be likely to pass the board. The data from statement 8 suggests otherwise. In many respects, this result tempers the irrationality of statement 1 and perhaps shows that first impressions do not have the level of influence first thought.

The importance of experience has long been recognised in the Police Service. Some would say that it occupies too important a role in the promotion selection system, to the detriment of gifted and yet relatively inexperienced promotion candidates. Undoubtedly, experience has a part to play, but caution needs to be exercised to ensure that it is not confused with an officers length of service and that different elements of experience are given due consideration.

The perceived importance of experience, is indicated by the fact that statements 2, 4, 13, 16, 17 and 18 all deal with different facets of it. Statement 1 looked at range of operational experience; statement 4 probed the vexed question of whether voluntary movement between departments enhances one's chances of promotion board success; statement 13 explored a topic which was very specific, the detrimental effect of an absence of acting-up experience on a candidates' chances of success; statement 17 probed exactly the same concept but from a different approach; statement 16 considered the effect on a promotion board of "unusual" experience; statement 18 was different in that it concerned itself with an element of experience which many would think unrelated to police work, namely supervisory experience in some other walk of life.

The results from statement 2 reinforce the popular belief that wide ranging operational experience is sought after. Over 80% of respondents indicated their belief in the importance of the concept. It would have been surprising had this statement produced a result which indicated assessors were not impressed by wide ranging experience and the data merely reinforces the popular belief.

Nevertheless, statement 4 produced data which seemed to contradict that from statement 1. To gain wide-ranging operational experience, it is necessary to move between departments and possibly even between geographical areas. That being so, it might have been expected that assessors would have been impressed by candidates who have achieved regular movement between departments. However, statement 4 indicated that only 35.8% of respondents were impressed by such movement. There seems to be a paradox here. Statement 13 indicated that assessors don't necessarily seek evidence that a candidate has experienced working in the rank to which he is aspiring, in an acting capacity, before selecting him for promotion. In the light of the general reliance placed upon experience, this result was somewhat surprising. However, statement 17 which also looked at the relevance of acting-up experience, but from a different approach, tended to provide contradictory evidence to that from statement 13. It indicated that just over 60% of respondents thought a candidate who had extensive acting-up experience would be likely to pass a promotion board. These results probably indicate that candidates who have acted-up regularly and presumably successfully, would be likely to pass a board by virtue of having proved they can do the job, whilst at the same time those who have not acted-up but who demonstrate other qualities, will not necessarily fail because of their lack of acting-up experience. Viewed in this way, the data appears quite rational.

For experience to play a proper role in promotion board decisions, it needs to be tested for sufficiency and relevance. The sufficiency test needs to encompass some method of weighing specific elements of experience against others and the relevance test must ensure that importance is not placed on experience which is so specialised so as to make it of little value to everyday policing. Statement 16 examined assessors' views of the likely influence of very specialised experience on a candidate's chances of promotion. 41% of respondents were inclined to think it would make a candidate more likely to pass a board; 33.9% were inclined to think the opposite: (The remainder didn't hold firm views on the statement.) These data tend to indicate traditionalism in that they show the largest group of assessors being impressed by specialised experience which is normally gained in what are generally regarded as the "glamour departments."

Sight should never be lost of the task a promotion board is attempting to achieve. It is aiming to identify officers who will make effective supervisors. That being the case, one might have expected experience of previous supervision to have been relevant. Statement 18 dealt with this very topic, in exploring the importance of supervisory experience outside the police service. Not surprisingly, the data from the statement showed assessors, in the main, were unimpressed with such experience. This result was to be expected since there remains a traditional belief, albeit more and more people are coming to reject it, that

policing is so unique an occupation, it cannot be compared with any other. In Weberian terms, the bureaucratisation of the Police has major similarities with other organisations. Furthermore, man management skills, one of the major weapons in any supervisors armoury, are similar across organisations. For these reasons, it would have been encouraging to have seen previous supervisory experience being of importance to a larger proportion of assessors. Staying with the controversial topic of experience, statement 10 provided an interesting insight into how many assessors view the phenomena. Experience should not be confused with potential; the former is gained, the latter is inherent. That having been said, potential supplemented by experience is the ideal mix with some individuals making good supervisors by having an abundance of one as opposed to the other. However, some individuals are so lacking in potential that it is impossible to make up their short-comings with experience.

On this premise, it might have been expected that assessors would be reluctant to pass candidates in the latter one third of their police service, feeling that if they had potential it would have been identified earlier. However statement 10 showed this not to be the case. This may be another indication of traditionalism and an over emphasis on the importance of experience.

Chapter two contained a discussion on the unreliability of the interview as a selection tool. The criticisms levelled were not confined to the police service and it is evident from the studies quoted in Chapter 2, that the technique has been discredited across organisations. However, despite its shortcomings, the interview has not lost its appeal.

Assessors appear to see it as an opportunity to indulge in a ritualistic display of their authority; a chance to demonstrate overtly that they have subordinates careers in their hands. The degree to which it has become engrained in selection systems has resulted in it becoming traditional. Statement 3 looked at the extent to which, in the South Wales Constabulary, a good interview performance can convince assessors that a candidate is worthy of passing a promotion board. The data from this statement confirmed that the Force does adopt a traditional approach with over 70% of respondents agreeing or partially agreeing with the proposition posed.

One of the conditions of service for a police officer is that he must be prepared to work in any location within his Forces' boundaries. This inevitably leads to officers moving between divisions, often with a consequent need for whole families to be relocated. Clearly, such upheavals are not welcome but, nevertheless, often accompany promotion. The rationale behind this system is to be found partly in operational necessity and partly in the opinion of senior officers that it is undesirable



for an officer to be promoted to a position in which he will have to supervise subordinates who, in the recent past, were his colleagues. The fact that the practice is widespread and has taken place over a long period of time, has made promotion synonymous with transfer. In short the practice has become traditional, although a substantial school of thought views it as rational.

Statement 7 confirmed that a majority of assessors thought a candidate who expressed a willingness to move to another area of the Force, on promotion, was more likely to pass a board than one who didn't. In many respects this result was to be expected and can be argued to be rational. However, the willingness of an officer to move does not enhance his suitability for promotion, it merely enables him to be fitted into a system which has become traditional. Of particular interest, was the NPTT analysis of these data. It indicated to a significance level of 0.0424 that Chief Superintendents were less impressed by a candidates' willingness to move than were Superintendents who in turn were less impressed than Chief Inspectors. This analysis may indicate that more senior officers have a greater inclination to look for criteria which are relevant to the task at hand, than do more junior officers.

Despite there being a large element of traditionalism in questionnaire 1 there is also evidence that rationalisation has not passed the promotion selection system by. This is to be found in statements 6, 11, 12 and 14.

The esteem in which the selection interview is held by assessors has already been mentioned. Irrespective of the evidence which suggests it is flawed as a predictor of future performance, its continued use and admiration necessarily focuses attention on its content and what constitutes a good performance as opposed to a bad one.

Statement 6 examined one element of interview performance, namely the ability to answer questions in a manner which indicates an in depth knowledge of the subject on which the question is based. Despite the well documented and accepted criticisms of the interview, (see Chapter 2), demonstration of in depth knowledge, particularly of topics which are police related, may indicate a number of things. It may give an insight into a candidates intellect; where knowledge is used to support opinions, it may demonstrate reasoning powers; it provides an opportunity for communication skills to be shown off; it may indicate a willingness to encompass a variety of points of view. These factors probably influence selection decisions and have been, or will be, argued to be rational. Consequently, it would seem rational to place reliance on the answering of board questions in a manner which indicates an in depth knowledge of the topic on which the question was formulated, since it provides an opportunity for the qualities mentioned above, which seem rational, to be evaluated.

However, a rider needs to be added; in depth knowledge in isolation is of little use in an organisation which is essentially practical. It needs to be accompanied by other qualities.

The data from statement 6 indicates the reliance placed by assessors on answering questions in a manner which reveals an in depth knowledge. Over 80% of respondents agreed or partially agreed with the statement. Within the limitations of the interview these data are encouraging and indicate rationalism.

It would seem reasonable to expect a candidate for promotion to have a good knowledge of the work and responsibilities annexed to the appointment he is seeking. The extent to which assessors are impressed by such knowledge was examined in statement 11. The data indicated overwhelmingly that they were impressed by knowledge of the next rank. One would assume that such knowledge should include an awareness of the problems associated with the rank and some ideas on how to solve them. Viewed in this way knowledge is desirable and rational and should quite properly influence selection decisions. However, there is a difference between knowledge of the rank and suitability for promotion. Whilst it is rational for assessors to be impressed by knowledge, they must guard against interpreting it as an ability to turn that knowledge into practice. Nevertheless, this result was to be expected.

The fact that policing is people orientated, highlights the importance of officers possessing good oral communication skills. The nature of the organisation dictates that written skills are required too. Whilst these skills are important at all levels within the organisation they are specially relevant to supervisory officers. There are two reasons for this. Firstly supervisors need to be able to communicate instructions to ensure that their commands are implemented. Secondly, they need to be able to evaluate and advise on the communications of their subordinates to ensure they are generally understood by whoever is receiving them.

The importance of communication skills formed the basis of statement 12 and it was extremely encouraging to note that 87% of respondents identified possession of these skills as being likely to lead to promotion. Whilst overall this result appears rational, it also contains a degree of irrationality, in that the forum available for their evaluation i.e. the selection interview, provides next to no opportunity for written skills to be assessed.

It seems logical to assume that operational policing relies heavily on team work and optimum performance is normally achieved by a team which operates in a disciplined manner. However, striking the correct level of discipline is difficult, too repressive an approach may stifle initiative and destroy morale; too "laissez-faire" an attitude may result in loss of control.

The supervisor who can attach the most appropriate leadership style to the situation is likely to be successful.

Statement 14 concerned itself with this delicate balance and it was pleasing to note that 75% of respondents acknowledged the importance of selecting candidates for promotion who were seen as able to impose discipline without being repressive or "laissez-faire" in their approach.

Having explored various elements of rationalism and traditionalism in questionnaire one let us now look at questionnaire 3. The reader will recall that earlier it was suggested that the very nature of statements 2, 3, 4, 14, 15, 16, 19 and 27, which dealt with determination, ability to get on with other people, leadership skills, knowledge of topical policing issues, maturity, extrovert character, enthusiasm and application, respectively, indicated traditionalism and the responses in relation to these statements further confirmed this point of view.

It must also be remembered that a number of the statements in questionnaire 3 examined criteria which were the subject of statements in questionnaire one. Even though assessors were left in no doubt that their responses in questionnaire 1 should relate to sergeants seeking promotion to inspector and in questionnaire 3 to constables seeking promotion to sergeants, remarkably similar results were forthcoming concerning statements which were

similar, but repeated on both questionnaires. This in itself seems irrational. In particular statements 1, 5, 20, 23 and 29 dealt with oral expression, range of experience, communication skills, supervisory experience outside the police service and interview performance respectively - all matters raised on questionnaire 1. The consistency of results between questionnaires on these topics, precludes the need for further explanation here, since comments made concerning questionnaire 1 are equally valid for questionnaire 3.

Turning to those statements which remain and which indicate a traditionalist approach, attention can immediately be focused on statement 12. This statement examined the concept of 'track record of commitment'. Whilst commitment is admirable and desirable it does not necessarily indicate suitability for promotion. Additionally, it means different things to different people and there do not appear to be any objective measures of it. However, the data from the statement indicates that assessors do place reliance on commitment when coming to decisions. In fact 68% of respondents agreed or partially agreed that a candidates track record of commitment would be influential in determining whether he passed the board.

One of the weaknesses of the selection interview (see Chapter 2), appears to be that it does not provide an opportunity for assessors to determine with any accuracy, whether a candidate can do what he claims he can do. Furthermore it provides a forum in

which knowledge of a particular subject can be mistaken for an ability to put that knowledge into practice.

Whilst it would be difficult to argue that knowledge of topical policing issues and professional knowledge are not desirable, candidates who possess them do not necessarily have the ability to apply that knowledge. Nevertheless, statements 7 and 14 indicated that assessors are impressed by knowledge of topical policing issues and professional knowledge to such an extent that a large majority of them thought candidates who demonstrate they possess this knowledge would be likely to pass a promotion board.

From time to time, different aspects of police work achieve a high profile amongst both the public and police officers. Regularly C.I.D. officers come to prominence when major incidents become national news. Furthermore, the nature of the work in which they are involved is often perceived by the public to be of greater importance than that undertaken by uniformed officers. These factors have in the past produced a popular myth that the C.I.D. is an elite whose officers are more likely to be promoted. However, the introduction of community policing and recent spontaneous outbursts of major public disorder have raised the profile of uniformed policing.

Whilst there is no evidence to prove that C.I.D. experience has in the past received undue weight in promotion decisions, the data from statement 21 suggests that assessors currently do not view it as unduly influential. This result seems rational although the mere fact that statement 21 was included indicates traditionalism.

Another example of a rational approach to a statement which dealt with a traditional belief is to be found in statement 22. For some inexplicable reason ex-servicemen have generally been regarded as likely to be effective and successful police officers. This belief may stem from the fact that they have previously operated in a disciplined environment and find police discipline easy to accept. However, there appears to be no rational reason why this belief should persist.

Furthermore, even if ex-servicemen do adapt well to police work there is no logical reason why they should be more likely to be promoted. Nevertheless, statement 22 suggested this was the case. Whilst its inclusion was probably based on traditionalism the data emanating from it refreshingly indicated that assessors took a rational approach and are not unduly influenced by Armed Forces experience.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, coupled with a sizeable increase in the proportion of female officers in the service has led to a feeling amongst a large body of male officers that female



officers receive positive discrimination. This feeling is particularly prominent when the emotive subject of promotion selection is raised. Against this background, it was somewhat surprising that statement 24 was introduced; it suggested that male officers are more likely to pass a promotion board than female officers. The extent to which it was out of step with popular thinking was indicated by the majority of assessors disagreeing or partially disagreeing with it. Whilst this result may indicate traditionalism, the data shows that women are possibly looked upon favourably in terms of promotion. The reality seems different. Currently 7.9% of the officers in the South Wales Constabulary are female and 1.7% of supervisory officers female. Clearly, this suggests an under representation of females in the supervisory ranks. However, in 1980 the situation was different; only 4.3% of the Forces officers were female, but 1.7% of supervisors were female. These data indicate that the under representation has become more marked in recent years and are not compatible with a view that females receive positive discrimination in terms of promotion. The work of Jones(1986) is relevant here and will be discussed later.

In addition to the interview being flawed as a selection tool, the police promotion interview has the added problem of interviewers of varying seniority sitting together. This inevitably raises the suspicion that lower ranking members of the panel have little influence over the decisions made. Such thinking probably led to the inclusion of statement 30 which proposed that a candidate who does not fit a promotion board

chairman's expectations of an officer who is suitable for promotion, is unlikely to pass the board. (The board chairman will always be a Chief Superintendent whilst other members will be of a lower rank.) The majority of assessors agreed or partially agreed with statement 30, perhaps indicating they feel that in the past their views have been overlooked.

Perhaps not unexpectedly, NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.004 that Chief Superintendents and Superintendents were more in disagreement with the statement than were Chief Inspectors. This analysis may indicate that more senior officers unconsciously ignore the views of their juniors rather than reject them out of hand. Overall, though this statement indicates traditionalism.

Having identified a substantial element of traditionalism in questionnaire 3 to what extent can rationalism be identified?

The unpredictable nature of police work and the myriad of situations officers regularly encounter, require the use of good reasoning powers to arrive at balanced judgements. Often this reasoning has to be based upon incomplete information which relates to a set of circumstances which includes irrational and emotive behaviour. The ability to make such judgements is sought after in all police officers, but is particularly important in supervisory officers. The overwhelming agreement with statement

7 indicates that assessors are impressed by good reasoning skills and rationally feel that they are likely to lead to promotion.

NPTT analysis of the data from statement 7 indicates, perhaps surprisingly, that Chief Superintendents were less impressed with good reasoning powers than were Superintendents, who in turn were less impressed than Chief Inspectors (Significance level 0.0516 - had sample been larger, this result may have been significant.)

Closely linked with statement 7 was statement 8. For similar reasons to those which made good reasoning powers a sought after commodity, the ability to grasp issues quickly is important.

All police officers need this skill, but its importance is even more marked when it comes to being a supervisor. Assessors in their responses to statement 8 indicated that they are impressed by an ability to grasp issues quickly and would be likely to promote an officer who possessed the quality. This seems a rational approach about a concept which can be tested at interview.

A quick glance at the appointments page of any quality newspaper will give an indication of the significance a lot of employers place upon academic qualifications. However, the police service only relatively recently decided that it too recognised their importance, (Graduate Entry Scheme introduced in 1968.) Unfortunately, that recognition has not pervaded all the service

and there remains a substantial number of officers who have little regard for academic qualifications. Against this back drop it was refreshing to see statement 10 introduced. Nevertheless, the extent to which assessors are impressed by academic qualifications was indicated by less than half of them agreeing that a candidate's level of academic qualifications would be likely to influence whether he passed a promotion board. In essence then, the inclusion of statement 10 was encouraging, but the data emanating from it, not altogether surprisingly, indicated that a traditional approach still subsists.

Allied to statement 10, statement 11 examined whether intellectual ability impressed assessors. Whilst there is no guarantee that intellectual ability is always accompanied by academic qualifications, it would not seem unreasonable to assume they often go hand in glove. Nevertheless, since the two commodities are not inextricably linked, one might have hoped that assessors who, for what ever reason, were unimpressed by academic qualifications, might admire intellectual ability. Unfortunately, there was no evidence that this was the case, and less than 50% of assessors indicated they feel intellectual ability influences promotion decisions. So all in all the inclusion of statement 11 indicated rationalism, but assessors views in relation to it failed to confirm that a rational approach is being applied.

Policing is a people orientated activity. Police Officers daily come into contact with members of the public from all social classes and often from varying ethnic backgrounds. Each of these contacts require the use of verbal communication skills. Coupled with this, the bureaucratic nature of the modern police service also demands the ability to communicate in writing. Supervisory officers have an extra need for these skills. They have to make use of them in communicating with their subordinates and in ensuring that more junior officers maintain sufficiently high standards so that the service functions effectively and maintains the respect of the general public. Consequently, it was not surprising to find communication skills included in questionnaire 3. Accepting that an interview does not provide a forum to evaluate written skills, it does offer an opportunity to assess verbal communication ability. From the data, it appears that assessors take advantage of this opportunity and place great store on communication skills when making decisions about promotion. The inclusion of statement 20 and the data emanating from it are encouraging signs that rationalism is at work.

Bearing in mind the limitations of the selection interview, it is probable that factors other than interview performance affect assessors decisions. Possibly of greatest significance are written reports on candidates. Statement 25 indicates strongly that these reports do influence board decisions. This may mean that assessors recognise the limitations of the selection interview, and substitute other factors for interview performance when reaching decisions. Such an approach would be rational.

The remaining statements on questionnaire 3 do not really contribute to an analysis of whether the promotion system is predominantly traditional or rational. So what precise conclusions then can be drawn about the approach of assessors to the task of selection?

Firstly, there is a strong body of evidence to show that qualities which are difficult to assess and which probably mean different things to different assessors, hold a position of prominence in the selection system. Reliance on these qualities can in the main be attributed to traditionalism.

Secondly, some more easily measurable qualities, e.g. experience in a particular department, and breadth of experience, seem to be given undue weight. This too is possibly traditionalist but does contain a degree of rationalism, since it at least shows that measurable criteria are considered.

Coupling these points together, it is possible to conclude that the selection system is predominantly traditionalist. This conclusion is at first sight, difficult to reconcile with the earlier suggestion that the police service is a bureaucracy in the Weberian sense. However, the dynamic nature of a Weberian bureaucracy has associated with it continual change. The evidence indicates that an element of rationalism has already permeated the promotion selection system and it may be that gradually it will move further in this direction. Nevertheless, at present it remains a pocket of traditionalism in a broadly rational organisation.

## CHAPTER SIX

### ANALYSIS OF RESULTS – CANDIDATES' PERCEPTIONS

Faced with a system which is predominantly irrational, candidates understandably encounter problems preparing themselves for promotion boards. This is because they cannot discern with any certainty what the board is seeking in them if they are to be successful. Furthermore, in the current system, with its absence of feedback, they also experience difficulty in analysing their own board performances and, in the majority of cases, why they failed. This problem was highlighted by a comment made by a constable who completed questionnaire 4. He said, "If the follow up to boards gave officers the true reason for their not being selected, then at least they would have something to work on thus assisting them to improve ....."

In such an environment, it is not surprising that a number of theories have developed, each of which offers an explanation of what really does influence a promotion selection board and these can be seen in questionnaire answers and comments.

#### 1. The "Mr. Clean" Theory

In years gone by, the propriety of an officers home life was viewed as something to be admired and its absence as incompatible with a successful police career. Whilst these views may seem 'Victorian', an element of them still subsists today. This is evidenced by the inclusion of Statement 8 in questionnaire 4. During preparation of this questionnaire it was suggested that an officer who has been divorced is less likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is married or has never been married.



Clearly, in terms of an officer's potential for advancement, his marital status is of little relevance and on this basis, the raising of this issue was irrational. Encouragingly, the extent of its irrationality was identified by a majority of candidates who didn't agree that a divorce would adversely affect an officer's chances of promotion.

In a similar vein, statements 30, 32 and 33 on questionnaire 4 dealt with aspects of private lives which certainly would have influenced promotion decisions in years gone by and might to an extent, still have an effect today.

Promiscuity by females is something which society generally seems to regard as undesirable. Similarly, promiscuity by males is not welcome but perhaps not to the same degree. The notion that male promiscuity is more acceptable than female promiscuity is thought by some to influence the promotion system as evidenced by the inclusion of Statement 30. The rationality behind this thinking is difficult to understand and the data from the statement confirms that the majority of respondents do not agree that female promiscuity would have a more adverse effect on promotion than male promiscuity. These data indicated rational thinking by the majority about a proposition which was initially flawed by its irrationality. NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.0371 that candidates who were successful at the last promotion board were less inclined to agree with the statement and thus more rational than were candidates who were unsuccessful.

Opinions were diverse concerning Statement 32. Logically, the marital status or domestic circumstances of an officer should have little bearing on his or her suitability for promotion, but for some unknown reason, quite a sizeable proportion of respondents perceived a link between being married with children and achieving promotion

The data from Statement 33 is probably the most easily understood of this particular group. It indicates that a large majority of candidates perceive an officer whose private life is outwardly respectable to be more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer whose private life is turbulent. Society in general values respectability and order and the Police Service is an organisation charged with, amongst other things, the task of preserving order. Working upon the principle that 'people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones', it is difficult to argue that the police service can promote order and deserve respect whilst at the same time suffering, or even worse, promoting officers, who are outwardly unrespectable. On this basis, it is possible to understand the data relating to Statement 33 and to view it as rational, even though the private life of an officer may have absolutely no bearing upon his ability to be a first class supervisory officer.

In short then, most candidates perceive promotion selection as having outgrown being influenced by divorce and also consider female promiscuity no more detrimental than male promiscuity.

However, they do perceive being married with children and being outwardly respectable as likely to improve a candidates' chance of success.

## 2. The Academic Theory

Conspicuous by their absence in Questionnaire 1 were any references by assessors to the relevance of academic qualifications in promotion selection decisions. Questionnaire 3, Statement 10, did explore this topic and it was somewhat surprising that more than half of the assessors who responded, disagreed or partially disagreed with the proposition, that a candidates' level of academic qualifications is likely to be influential in determining whether he passes a promotion board. A possible explanation for these views has already been given and it does seem that assessors hold traditional and irrational views on the relevance of academic qualifications.

However, Constables seeking promotion seem to take a more rational stance. 80% of respondents to Statement 7 on Questionnaire 4 perceived candidates who hold a degree as being more likely to pass a promotion board than candidates who don't. These views were reinforced by Sergeants, who, despite not having had the opportunity to express their views on the topic in the main body of Questionnaire 2, did indicate with anecdotal comments that they felt academic qualifications are influential in promotion decisions.

Typical of the responses was one from an unsuccessful candidate who said "Academic qualifications affect selection procedures regardless of the fact that this knowledge cannot be applied to practical policing".

Another unsuccessful candidate commented "A candidate having obtained a degree is not better qualified for promotion than officers not holding degree qualifications".

A third commented, "I feel that too much is made of the studies which an officer is making i.e. Police or degree studies".

Finally an unsuccessful candidate put the matter quite succinctly when he said, "Officers with degrees are more likely to be promoted than those without".

Respondents to Questionnaire 4 also felt the need to comment. One who was unsuccessful at the last board said, "Further qualifications will provide success in promotion even if that person is not the best candidate"

Another who was successful made his feelings known regarding academic qualifications by saying "Officers who indicate their willingness to participate in further academic studies will be more likely to be successful".

A third successful candidate demonstrated what was probably contempt for academic qualifications with his curt comment, "Academic qualifications tend to impress".

A glance at the employment pages of any quality newspaper will confirm that in a lot of work situations, hiring decisions are based largely upon past academic performance and in many cases paper sifting takes place of candidates who do not measure up. Furthermore, what are generally regarded as desirable, but nonetheless demanding jobs, are normally filled by individuals who have a high level of academic qualifications. These examples indicate the store placed upon academic qualifications by employers in general and it would be naive of the police service and the South Wales Constabulary in particular, to suggest they have only a minimal role to play in promotion selection decisions. However, what is apparent is that candidates perceptions of the store placed on academic qualifications are not reflected in assessors views on their relevance. Nevertheless, sight should not be lost of the evidence which has emerged in the comments, which suggests that candidates, despite perceiving academic qualifications as important in selection, do not really think they are relevant.

The attitude of assessors is perhaps more understandable when viewed against the proportion of graduates in each of the ranks involved in selection at Divisional Boards.

Table 1

Current Proportion of Graduates in Rank

<u>C/Supt</u>	23%
<u>Supt</u>	21%
<u>C/Insp</u>	17%

3. The "Brotherhood" Theory

For some time now, in many walks of life, speculation has abounded regarding the influence of outside organisations on the career development of their members. There is a substantial body of opinion which feels that membership of Rotary, Round Table and in particular Freemasonry, is likely to better an individuals' chances of progressing within his work environment.

KNIGHT (1984, p113) in his somewhat sensational book, "The Brotherhood", indicates the extent to which he believes Masonic influences pervade the police service. He says "There are now so many allegations about masonic corruption within the Service (Police Service) that even if ninety-nine per cent of them were wholly groundless - and no one who has investigated it could accept that for one moment - we are still left with a disturbing situation".

KNIGHT is one of a number of commentators who have suggested that the Police Service is one of the organisations in which the influence of Freemasonry is most regularly felt. Consequently, it was not surprising that membership of influential outside organisations was raised by candidates during the preparation of Questionnaire 4. Data gathered in relation to Statement 6 on this questionnaire indicated that a large majority of candidates did regard membership of an influential outside organisation as being likely to improve an individual's chances of promotion. To an extent these data are perverse since the statement made no mention of what was meant by an influential organisation. However, it is probable that many respondents took the reference to mean Freemasonry and to an extent, this view is borne out by the anecdotal comments made on Questionnaire 2, which included six direct references to Masonic membership influencing selection decisions.

It is equally probable that these perceptions were grounded upon innuendo and speculation since this study produced no evidence to prove that Freemasonry or any other organisation influences promotion selection decisions. Nevertheless, despite being irrational, it is somewhat disturbing and possibly damaging to the Service, that such a large body of opinion feels that promotion selection decisions are influenced in this way.

#### 4. The Black Theory

In recent years, the suggestion that black employees receive positive discrimination has raised its head in many organisations. A discussion on its possible introduction into the Police Service was contained in Lord SCARMAN's report on the Brixton Riots of 1981. Against this background, it was not surprising to find the topic introduced in Questionnaire 4.

The data from Statement 4 of this questionnaire indicates that candidates perceive coloured officers as being more likely to be successful at a promotion board. The irrationality of these perceptions is readily apparent for a number of reasons. Firstly, there are only 15 coloured officers currently serving in the South Wales Constabulary and of these only 3 are qualified for promotion. Only one holds supervisory rank and he is a Sergeant. As a proportion of the total number qualified they are insignificant and perceptions formulated on this basis can only be viewed as a manifestation of a popular belief held by people in many walks of life that positive discrimination is at work. Secondly, NPTT analysis has shown to a significance level of 0.0069 that candidates who were successful at the last divisional promotion board were far more in disagreement that coloured officers were likely to pass a promotion board than were candidates who were unsuccessful. This suggests that the perception could be based on "sour grapes" and that in accordance



with many other facets of life, a spurious but readily available explanation ie. positive discrimination, has been offered by many candidates in place of a more likely but unpalatable alternative for failure.

## 5. The Female Theory

Smith and Gray (1983,p91) comment upon a "Cult of masculinity" pervading the Metropolitan Police. This manifests itself in "the emphasis placed on masculine solidarity and on backing up other men in the group especially when they are in the wrong, the stress on drinking as a test of manliness and a basis of good fellowship, the importance given to physical courage and the glamour attached to violence". (Ibid)

These traits influence policeman's attitudes towards female and particularly female police officers who are predominantly seen as inferior because of their alleged limited physical strength.

The phenomenon is not confined to the Metropolitan Police and is to be found throughout Police Forces, the length and breadth of the country.

One aspect of the 'cult of masculinity' is the impression held by a lot of male officers that females are likely to receive positive discrimination in promotion selection. This view is probably tied up with the attitude that females are inferior as police officers, because of their supposed physical limitations,

and those selected for promotion receive it at the expense of more deserving and able male officers merely to paint a picture of equal opportunities.

An examination of the disposition of females in the South Wales Constabulary brings these attitudes into sharp focus

As stated earlier, currently, 7.9% of the officers in the Force are female and 1.7% of supervisory officers female. The percentages suggest that females are under-represented in the supervisory ranks. On this basis, the perceptions indicated in Statement 22, on Questionnaire 4, which suggest that female officers are more likely to be successful at a promotion board, are irrational. If, however, the perceptions are based upon a belief that efforts are being made to redress the shortfall then the data could be rational. If it were possible to show that the percentage of female supervisory officers had increased over time, it might be possible to conclude that this was the result of a conscious policy of favouring females and not a manifestation of able females being selected for promotion.

In fact, the real situation shows that the under-representation of females in the supervisory ranks has become more pronounced in recent years. In 1980, 4.3% of officers in the force were female and 1.7% of supervisory officers female. These percentages bring into perspective the irrationality of candidates who perceive females as having a greater chance of being successful at a

promotion board and explode the myth of positive discrimination in promotion.

However, it is interesting to note that these chauvinistic attitudes are not confined to the South Wales Force. Jones (1986 p.115) encountered similar attitudes in her work. These were encapsulated in the words of one officer she interviewed. He said "it always seems to me that when you read the orders of promotions that when a woman police officer has passed her exams she's automatically considered. I think there's more vacancies initially made for them". Jones also concluded that there was no evidence to support these attitudes and that they were an inaccurate reflection of the actual promotion prospects of female officers.

## 6. The Mentor Theory

The moral rights or wrongs of attempting to find favour with a supervisory officer in the hope that he will in turn offer active support at a promotion board, is immaterial to this study. However, what is of interest is the extent to which candidates see a need to indulge in the practice. There has been a long held popular view that an individual's chances of promotion will be improved if he has a 'mentor'. Data in relation to Statement 25 on Questionnaire 4 confirms this belief is still widespread. The fact that similar beliefs pervade many walks of life, coupled with the probability they are valid beliefs, has led to the

phenomenon becoming customary. That being so, it is understandable that candidates should perceive officers who make a conscious effort to secure a good rapport with senior officers as being more likely to be successful at a promotion board.

Similarly, in many instances cynics have attributed the success of individuals to their relationships with people who hold positions of power and authority. In particular, suggestions that family relationships influence promotion selection decisions abound. The Police Service, in which promotion is of such importance, is no exception. It was no surprise therefore, that Statement 10 on Questionnaire 4 raised the issue of family relationships influencing selection decisions. The inclusion of the statement probably indicates a degree of traditionalism based upon an historical belief of nepotism being almost endemic in most walks of life. That being the case, it seems rational for candidates to perceive its influence as still being a factor. In fact, data from Statement 10 was not as conclusive as might have been expected, but, nevertheless, a majority of respondents did perceive family relationships as being influential.

Whilst Statement 25 probed the affect of candidates actively seeking the support of a senior officer, Statement 37 extended the scenario slightly by examining the effect a mentor, who has been cultivated, could have on board decisions.

It proposed quite simply that a candidate who had a 'mentor' would have more chance of passing a promotion board than a candidate who is left to his own devices. Respondents showed overwhelmingly that they agreed with this proposition indicating they quite rationally felt that a supportive senior officer could influence their chances of success.

Surprisingly, NPTT analysis of these data showed to a significance level of 0.0378 that unsuccessful candidates were more inclined to disagree with the statement than were successful candidates. This may help explain their lack of success!!

The data from these three statements confirm the reliance placed by candidates upon a supportive senior officer, be he a relative, a senior officer who paternally rewards loyalty shown him by a subordinate, or simply a senior officer who has recognised talent and who is anxious to see it used to best effect.

Additionally, the perceived importance of a mentor came shining through in anecdotal comments from respondents to Questionnaire 2. They not only recognised a mentor's importance but also identified Divisional Chief Superintendents as being the ideal choice and likely to be most influenced.

One unsuccessful candidate made it quite clear that he felt the recommendation of a candidates own Chief Superintendent "was of vital importance at a divisional promotion board".

Another put it quite strongly by saying, "The overriding influence on the promotion board members is the opinion of the Chief Superintendent".

A third suggested. "The main criteria for promotion is the recommendation of your Divisional Chief Superintendent ....." Of interest is that all references to the importance of Chief Superintendents' recommendations were made by candidates who were unsuccessful at the last divisional promotion board. Mention was made in chapter one of the theoretical concept of paternalism and of its inherent reciprocity. The evidence from Statements 10, 25 and 37, coupled with the above comments, clearly indicate that candidates perceive a need to secure a 'mentor', and presumably they take action accordingly. However, no evidence has emerged to indicate that assessors keep their part of the paternalism bargain by rewarding subordinate loyalty with promotion.

## 7. The Interview Theory

In Chapter 2, Page 29, HERRIOT was quoted as saying "The reviews of the selection interview have established that, as usually conceived, it has very poor predictive power relative to other assessment tools". Similarly, ARVEY and CAMPION's words on the same page illustrated like sentiments. They said "Perhaps the glaring 'black hole' in ..... the current literature concerns the issue of why the use of the interview persists in view of evidence of relatively low validity, reliability and its

susceptibility to bias and distortion". These quotes emphasize the level of esteem credited to the interview as a selection tool and are a reflection of the findings of a number of studies. Nevertheless, despite its shortcomings the selection interview remains popular and influential amongst police assessors.

However, the fact that it has been discredited has not escaped the notice of candidates in the system. Several respondents to Questionnaires 2 and 4 felt the need to add comments concerning the interview.

One unsuccessful candidate at the last board, who completed Questionnaire 2, pointed out that "The interview is far too short (20 - 30 minutes). More notice and attention of the officers' previous appraisals ..... the officer may be a good supervisor who is unable to project himself on a promotion board".

An unsuccessful candidate touched upon the problem of consistency amongst individual promotion boards. He said, "..... it appears selection requirements differ between these boards".

Several officers commented upon the difficulty which they encounter in projecting an accurate picture of themselves in the false surroundings of a promotion board. One unsuccessful candidate crystallised the problem in the words, ".... inability to project oneself on such interview ....."

Another said, "..... capability of expressing oneself adequately to the board". One candidate responding to Questionnaire 4 who was unsuccessful at the last board, said "The interview does not reflect totally the abilities of which he is capable - too much seems to be on "communicative skills" and not enough on experience and ability to perform the job as Sergeant".

Another candidate who was successful commented, "Too much emphasis on the half hour interview which does not give a true reflection of the officer's ability".

Finally, a further unsuccessful candidate commented that "The ability to overcome the unnatural atmosphere of a board and to perhaps deceive the board by performing outside of natural character" will ensure success.

These views indicate that promotion candidates have serious doubts about whether the selection interview affords them a reasonable opportunity to convince assessors of their true worth. They also indicate that candidates recognise the importance of the interview in the eyes of assessors.

#### 8. The Experience Theory

The importance of experience has been highlighted earlier. It is clear that assessors rely heavily on an examination of what candidates have done in the past when making decisions about



their suitability for advancement. Whilst past performance can give some indications of future potential it should not be viewed in isolation and certainly should be evaluated for relevance and sufficiency. This study has shown that assessors are probably over influenced by experience. However, its importance in selection decisions has not escaped the notice of candidates.

The perceived importance of experience and, more specifically, specialist experience is apparent in statements 1 and 9 on questionnaire 2. Whilst there is broad agreement that experience is a sought after commodity, the standard deviation calculation in relation to statement 1 indicates a spread of views concerning the perceived usefulness of C.I.D. experience.

However, in general these data indicate that most candidates hold a traditional view that experience is required if promotion is to be secured. Whilst it is difficult to argue against the notion that sufficient relevant experience should be a prerequisite for promotion and difficult to suggest that when viewed in this context it is not perfectly rational, it is interesting to note that none of the respondents make any reference to experience needing to be viewed in terms of its relevance or sufficiency.

Furthermore, no comment was made on how to quantify it or how to weigh one element of experience against another. Without these caveats these responses must be interpreted as indicating a traditional viewpoint.

Some other responses also give an indication of the perceived reliance placed on experience. Statements 7, 10, 25 on questionnaire 4 dealt respectively with the notions of experience in different geographical areas, a candidate's length of service and a candidate's age. One factor that is immediately apparent about each of them is the ease with which the criterion in question can be measured at a selection interview. A few quick and simple questions will give a complete picture of a candidate in terms of where he has served, how long he has been a police officer and how old he is. However, what is the real relevance in establishing these facts when one considers that the purpose behind the exercise should be to establish which candidates are best suited for promotion.

But, the very fact that candidates mentioned these three factors is a further indication that they view experience, in the broadest sense, as being important.

What is particularly interesting is the extent to which they agree or disagree with the importance of each of the individual statements. 52.1% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed that experience gained in different divisions of the force

would make a candidate more likely to pass a promotion board, whilst 25.4% disagreed with this proposition. Interestingly, 17.8% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. These data show that a small majority of candidates support the view that experience in different geographical areas will lead to promotion. This result tends to support the traditional view about experience.

To put these data into perspective it must be remembered that there are benefits to be gained from officers working in different areas, not least of which are cross fertilisation of ideas and the transfer of good practice. Also on a more personal basis, individuals may develop as a result of encountering new experiences, new practices and new people. However, there is no guarantee that a change of working environment will create greater potential for advancement, although it may in certain cases. For these reasons, the relevance of experience in different areas should not be over relied upon merely because it is easily measurable.

Statement 20 produced an interesting spread of views, indicated by a standard deviation of 1.46. In years past there was a popular belief that a qualifying period, in terms of years of service, had to be served before promotion would be forthcoming. The rationale behind that belief is difficult to identify but may be caught up in the great emphasis generally placed by the Service on experience and the fact that years of service are easy

to count.

These data may indicate that the numbers who subscribe to the "qualifying period" theory are diminishing. They may also indicate that respondents perceive that promotion candidates who have a lot of service and who have not been identified earlier in their careers as meriting advancement, are less likely to pass a promotion board. Either of these interpretations, if substantiated, would indicate a more rational approach to the importance of length of service, but in the absence of further information, it is difficult to draw any conclusion other than that opinion on the issue is divided.

The age of candidates appearing before a promotion board should, rationally, be of little relevance. Nevertheless, statement 25 explored the issue after it was raised by promotion candidates, presumably because they viewed it as being important. There was a spread of views regarding whether a candidates' age will be influential in determining success or failure (standard deviation 1.32) with the largest proportion perceiving that it would. It is possible there is an invisible link between age and experience and that those who subscribe to the argument that age will be influential, perceive one, mistakenly, for the other. All in all the data from statements 7, 20 and 25 seem to indicate an element of rationality penetrating traditionally held views, amongst candidates, on experience, but more detailed study is required if firm conclusions are to be drawn.

Statements 16, 19 and 20 on questionnaire 4 dealt with breadth of experience, C.I.D. experience and movement between divisions to broaden experience, respectively. Interestingly, data in relation to these statements was similar that from statements 1, 7 and 9 on questionnaire 2 showing that candidate perceptions regarding these elements of experience were broadly similar across the Sergeant and Constable ranks.

One piece of data which was of particular interest was the NPPT analysis of Statement 19 on questionnaire 4. This showed to a significance level of 0.008 that successful candidates at the last divisional promotion board were more in disagreement with Statement 19 than were unsuccessful candidates. This suggests that officers who were successful at the last board were less inclined to rate C.I.D. experience as important than were unsuccessful candidates. Sergeants seeking promotion to Inspector did not react in the same manner, there being no discernable difference between successful and unsuccessful candidates' perceptions of the relevance of C.I.D. experience to promotion selection. These results may indicate that experience as a supervisory officer produces a greater awareness of the importance and relevance of C.I.D. experience. Alternately, it may indicate that younger and generally less experienced constables who have successfully passed a promotion board take a more rational view than their unsuccessful colleagues about what prompted their success.

Also of note is the NPTT analysis of the data from Statement 20. This indicated to a significance level of 0.0013 that candidates who were unsuccessful at the last boards were more inclined to disagree with the statement than were candidates who were successful. This suggests that successful candidates perceived willingness to move between divisions to broaden experience, as being of greater relevance to promotion selection decisions, than did candidates who were unsuccessful. Although overall, Constables regarded movement between divisions as being more important to promotion selection decisions than Sergeants, (See Statement 7 on questionnaire 2 and Statement 20 on questionnaire 4), there was no difference in the perceptions of successful and unsuccessful Sergeants whereas Constables did have different views. These data may indicate that Constables who were successful at the last board attribute their success or that of their colleagues to having moved divisions whereas Sergeants who were successful did not attribute their success, or that of their colleagues, to this factor.

Reference was also made by candidates to a more obscure element of experience namely how service in an Operational Support Unit (OSU) would affect promotion decisions.

OSU's are relatively new to the South Wales Constabulary and provide an administrative service to operational officers, which keeps to a minimum the amount of time they spend dealing with paperwork. For some reason a number of constables who were

initially interviewed during the preparatory stages of questionnaire 4, felt that service in an OSU was likely to enhance an individuals chances of passing a promotion board. The logic behind such thinking is difficult to identify, but it is possibly associated with the newness of OSU's and the fact that they are still novel. However, when viewed objectively, the benefits of experience in an OSU are no more apparent than those which might be derived from service in any other administrative unit. Nevertheless, since it was raised during questionnaire preparation it was included. In many respects, the responses in relation to service in OSU (Statement 1, questionnaire 4) brought into perspective the importance which candidates, in general, placed upon such experience. Only 16.5% agreed or partially agreed that it was likely to make a candidate successful at a promotion board. Surprisingly, NPTT data revealed that those who were unsuccessful at the last promotion board were more inclined to agree that service in an OSU was likely to improve a candidates chances at a board. (Significant to a level of 0.0127). Overall, the data from Statement 1 indicates a rational approach, in that the largest proportion of candidates saw no significant benefit in OSU experience. However, at the same time it indicated that candidates who were unsuccessful at the last board were inclined to adopt a more irrational stance.

Reiner (1985, p 99), summed up the feelings of a number of writers when he said "The Police world is one of old fashioned machismo."

Evidence that this feeling is shared by candidates seeking promotion only surfaced once during this study and this was in relation to experience of policing ethnic minority communities.

The problem of policing such communities is one which has received a lot of publicity in recent years.

Toxteth, Handsworth, Brixton and Broadwater Farm all conjure up visions of turmoil and of police officers being faced with problems of monumental proportions. There is no doubt that extreme difficulties exist in policing such areas, but in the context of the South Wales Constabulary, the policing of ethnic minority communities is unproblematic. It is true that Cardiff has a long established community of mixed ethnic origin in the Docks area of the City, but its history of relatively stable community relations causes difficulty in comparing it with some of the more notorious areas in the country. Nevertheless, there seems to be something of a popular belief, held particularly by officers who work, or have worked, in the Docks area, that their jobs are, or were, more demanding and difficult than those of officers who police the indigenous community.

Evidence that this popular belief exists was forthcoming during the preparatory stage of Questionnaire 4. Officers from Cardiff



who were interviewed indicated they felt experience of policing an ethnic minority community would make an officer more likely to pass a promotion board. The reasoning behind this belief is difficult to understand but is probably based upon macho self image. In reality, experience of policing an ethnic minority community is just one facet of specialist experience to be viewed alongside others such as C.I.D. work, community policing or traffic policing. It was somewhat encouraging to note that a majority of respondents to Statement 5 on Questionnaire 4 took a rational view of ethnic minority experience and did not agree or partially agree that such experience was likely to lead to success at a promotion board. Nonetheless, a sizeable proportion of respondents (44.1%) did agree or partially agree with the statement.

The volume of references to experience and the general belief in it being influential in promotion selection decisions, come shining through in questionnaires 2 and 4. This indicates that candidates, like assessors place great store in experience, perhaps without having given real thought to how it can be quantified or whether in all cases, it is relevant.

9.     The Confidence Theory

Reference has already been made to assessors viewing self confidence as a desirable concept and feeling that it is likely to lead to a candidate being successful at a promotion board. It was suggested earlier that this approach is probably traditionalist. Whilst those comments remain valid, thought needs to be addressed to self-confidence in the context of the occupation under consideration i.e. policing. The nature of police work demands the making of almost instant decisions, often upon limited information and always without the benefit of hindsight. Furthermore, paradoxically, the requirement to make instant decisions more regularly falls upon junior officers than it does upon more senior officers. This results in relatively inexperienced staff being required to take action in circumstances where they are unsure about what needs to be done. It may be that in an effort to overcome this sense of helplessness, officers feel a need to portray a self-confident approach which suggests that they know what they are doing.

When viewed in this way, perceptions which indicate a need to appear self confident can be construed as rational; if there is an organisational requirement for self confidence, irrespective of whether that requirement is justified, then it is quite rational to strive to satisfy that requirement.

In fact, experience has shown that the police culture seems unable to accept inaction on the basis of ignorance and

consequently self confidence, when used to disguise ignorance, has become something which is admired. The extent to which candidates believe this to be the case is indicated in statement 8 of questionnaire 2, which reveals they feel the need to appear self confident if they are to be successful at a promotion board. Of particular interest are the results of NPTT analysis of these data, which show that candidates who failed the last board feel a much greater need to appear self confident than do candidates who were successful. Perhaps successful candidates have exploded a myth!!

#### 10. The Old Soldier Theory

Despite being faced with hostile football crowds, youths who indulge in serious public disorder and an escalation of violent crime, the Police service is some way from reaching for the Armalite.

Nevertheless, there is long standing popular belief that ex-servicemen are likely to make good police officers. This belief probably has its roots in recruiting patterns of the past, when it was common for ex-servicemen, to be attracted to the Service. It has also been enhanced by the ease with which ex-soldiers, sailors and airmen adapt to Police discipline.

During the formulation of questionnaire 4, the belief was somewhat extended and it was suggested that service in H.M. Armed Forces was likely to lead to success at a promotion board (Statement 3). Rationally, this argument is difficult to sustain and the data from respondents confirmed that there was not a great deal of support for it.

#### 11. The Communicator Theory

Whilst it has been suggested that assessors take a predominantly traditional stance when selecting officers for promotion, it has also emerged that a degree of rationality has penetrated their thinking. No where is this more apparent than in their acceptance that good communication skills are likely to improve a candidates chances of passing a board.

Candidates too have recognised the importance of good communication skills and perceive a need to possess them if they are to achieve promotion. Statements 17 and 29 of questionnaire 4 dealt with different aspects of communication skills, the former tested opinion as to their general worth and the latter looked more precisely at written skills and officers' attitudes towards paperwork. What emerged was clear evidence that candidates correctly perceive communication skills as being influential in promotion decisions.

Whilst it was clear from statement 29 that candidates recognised the importance of good pen and paper skills, there was a surprising lack of comment about the interview being an inappropriate forum for them to be tested. Nevertheless, the importance of this particular area of ability is understood by assessors and candidates alike, which cannot be said in relation to many other criteria which have been considered.

12.     The "Pot Luck" Theory

This theory suggests that assessors have no real idea what they are looking for in promotion candidates. It is based upon a belief that they have no inherent expertise and receive no formal training on how to select. The views of candidates emerged in the qualitative data from questionnaire 4. One respondent who was unsuccessful attempted to make a flippant comment by saying, "I would suggest that senior officers on promotion boards have no more idea of what a good candidate for promotion is than did the senior officers who promoted them in the first place! (non constructive criticism)". (Despite the fact that this comment was made by an officer who was attempting to pillory officers for whom he has no respect he touched on the valid criticism that selectors are untrained for their role).

An officer who failed to reach the headquarters promotion board made the very valid point, "There appears to be no formal training given to those with a responsibility of selection".

A third officer who was successful at the last board asked a very pertinent question, "Do senior officers promote in their own image in preference to making objective assessments?".

These comments indicate that candidates have reservations about whether assessors are capable of completing the task they are faced with. In many respects these reservations are understandable, since assessors do not receive formal training and there is no validation procedure to check whether board assessments turn out to be accurate

### 13. The Rugby Theory

Whilst it has to be conceded that Wales no longer occupies a position of dominance on the World Rugby Scene, the sport still seems to exercise a parochial influence over many aspects of South Wales life.

Perhaps not surprisingly, respondents to questionnaires 2 and 4 made comments which indicated they feel its influence stretches as far as the promotion selection system in the shape of first class players being selected on the basis of their rugby prowess. These comments were not widespread but came from candidates who were both successful and unsuccessful at the last board. Whilst there is no evidence to support the theory, it is unnerving to think that some candidates seem to believe that decisions are based upon such fatuous criteria.

Perhaps some solace can be drawn by noting that the majority of the comments came from candidates who were unsuccessful at the last board, who were possibly looking to attribute their failure to something other than their own inadequacy.

In addition to the emergence of the various theories, questionnaires 2 and 4 also revealed that candidates, like assessors, perceive criteria which are difficult to quantify and define as being important.

Questionnaire 2, Statements 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 23, 26, 27, 28 dealt with the concepts of an approachable personality, charismatic personality, self confidence ambition, excitable character, boisterousness, initiative, motivation, ability, leadership, adaptability, professionalism, enthusiasm and perception respectively.

Similarly, Questionnaire 4, statements 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 31, 34 and 39 dealt with leadership by example, practical effectiveness, strength of character, popularity, judgement, outgoing personality, confidence, ambition, discretion, ruthlessness, verbal aggression, determination and levels of industry respectively.

These criteria are 'woolly', not only do they mean different things to different people, they are extremely difficult to measure, particularly in the context of a selection interview.

Nevertheless, it is not surprising to find them mentioned, since they are concepts which have become part of the vocabulary of promotion selection.

However, when they are examined more carefully, their real relevance to accurate selection becomes apparent. It is possible to ask in relation to each of them, what does it mean? Can it be measured? Can it be analysed at a selection interview?

The myriad of answers which are possible to the first question coupled with the negative replies which are the only plausible answers to the other two, call into question the usefulness of the concepts in selection, in exactly the same way as many concepts introduced by assessors were of limited value.

What is apparent though is that these perceptions are based upon traditionalism indicating further that assessors do not have a monopoly of traditionalist views about promotion selection.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

## CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions which can be drawn from this work fall into two groups which are separate, but linked. Firstly there are conclusions in relation to the approach of assessors to promotion boards. Secondly there are conclusions concerning the perceptions of candidates in the system. These perceptions are clearly influenced by the selection system and the approach of assessors to it.

The core of the research's findings in relation to assessors is discussed on page 98. To reiterate, it is apparent that a strong body of evidence has emerged to show that assessors regard qualities which are difficult to assess and which probably mean different things to different assessors, as holding a position of prominence in the selection system. This is indicative of traditionalism.

It also emerged that easily measurable qualities, e.g. experience in a particular department and breadth of experience, are given undue weight. This too is probably indicative of traditionalism but does contain an element of rationalism in that it at least shows that measurable criteria are considered.

Combining these findings it is possible to conclude that the selection system is predominantly traditionalist. This is at first sight difficult to reconcile with the earlier arguments that the police service is a bureaucracy in the Weberian sense. However, continual change which is associated with Weberian

bureaucracy and the evidence of rationalism having penetrated the system, may indicate that a gradual movement towards more rational selection has begun. Nevertheless, at present, despite the initiatives which have been introduced whilst this research has been in progress and which are discussed in Appendix III , the system appears to remain a pocket of traditionalism in a broadly rational organisation.

Faced by this traditional and irrational promotion selection system, it is not surprising that candidates have developed a number of theories to try to explain what really is occurring. In some respects the development of these theories can be interpreted by applying MERTON'S "Typology of Modes of Individual Adaptation" which is described in Chapter one.

The goal, which the typology requires, is promotion. However, the "institutionalised means" for achieving the goal have become blurred by the irrationality of the system.

Merton suggests that the stability of any society or group relies for its continuance on the majority conforming to cultural goals and institutionalised norms. Where a group or organisation operates systems which preclude conformity, instability may be a consequence and may, in turn, militate against organisational effectiveness.

The South Wales Constabulary promotion selection system provides little scope for candidates to be what Merton calls 'Conformers', since despite the 'organisational goal', promotion, being well defined, the 'Institutionalised Means' for achieving it are blurred. Not surprisingly, new 'Institutionalised Means', the theories, have become accepted by candidates as an understandable response to this broadly irrational system. These new 'Means' are now seen by many as a 'blue print' for achieving promotion selection. Officers who subscribe to the theories, and have moulded their work performance in accordance with them, have become what Merton refers to as 'Innovators'. They follow the goal, promotion, but in the absence of well defined 'Institutionalised Means' for achieving it, have substituted what they see as alternative means.

The third adaptation in Merton's Typology 'Ritualism' also has a part to play. Manning (1977, p 158) comments, "..... the ambitious policeman is the exception. He is seen by other P.C.'s as a person who has given up a set of compensations in the form of easing, gimmicks, fiddles and relatively easily attained overtime work. The promoted man's gains are viewed as 'negative gains'. He pays mobility costs : the loss of housing (or time if he chose to remain in his present home and commute) and friendships and disruption of wife's and children's lives". This evaluation contains an implicit rejection of promotion as a 'Goal', the price to be paid for achieving it, being seen as too high. However, the probability is that many officers, who do

privately abandon the desire to be promoted feel unable to openly admit this and, as a result, ritualistically conform to the 'Institutionalised Means', in whatever form they exist, without really striving for the goal.

There are also those who have no difficulty in openly rejecting promotion as a goal and consequently have no need to follow the 'Institutionalised Means' for achieving it. This group are what Merton calls 'Retreatists'. The 'Retreatist' who openly rejects promotion usually manifests himself in one of two ways. Either he will be the dedicated officer who derives a large measure of satisfaction from his work and has no desire to take on further responsibility or he will be the officer who is dissatisfied with his lot but resigned to enduring it. The latter are normally difficult to motivate and generally unproductive.

Finally, there are those who substitute the 'Goal'. Promotion does not always bring with it greater financial reward, and a detective sergeant or constable who regularly has the opportunity to work overtime knows, if he is promoted to uniform duties, that his overtime will disappear and his take home pay reduce. A proportion of officers see this disincentive as an unacceptable price to pay for promotion, and consequently abandon it as a goal. Instead they substitute their own goal of maximising their pay. Manning (Ibid) identified this phenomenon in his research, particularly in the case of promotion from Chief Inspector to Superintendent. He says, "Furthermore, the movement into officer

rank requires a change in the basis by which pay is calculated from a salary with compensation for overtime in either hours off or money into a full-time salaried position-----". The 'guvs' -----were thought to be excessively ambitious for having paid and for continuing to pay this price -----". This group see no need to conform to the 'Institutionalised Means' for achieving promotion, having abandoned the goal and substituted a new one. Their goal, the maximisation of pay, requires different means, and within the constraints of organisational acceptability, these are constantly reviewed and amended in pursuit of the goal. Officers who have substituted new goals and means are catered for in Merton's Typology in the adaptation he calls 'Rebellion'.

It is, therefore, possible to identify all of Merton's adaptations in the promotion system. However, his analytical concepts of 'Conformity' and 'Innovation' are of most use in this research. If the promotion system is to achieve its aim of identifying those who are most suitable for promotion and at the same time re-inforce organisational stability and effectiveness, it needs to be adapted to allow officers to be 'Conformers' and eliminate the need for them to be 'Innovators'.

So to summarise, it appears that promotion selection is irrational and based predominantly on traditional criteria. In this climate, it is not altogether surprising that candidates have developed their own theories in an attempt to interpret the irrationality. It may be that these theories have developed to

such an extent that they now form what the majority see as the 'institutionalised means' of achieving promotion.

Perhaps overall this research has shown that an absence of clear criteria leaves a vacuum which the culture attempts to fill. It is to be hoped that a more rational and valid selection system will emerge as a result of the kind of evidence presented here.

## APPENDIX I

### RESULTS

(Note: In some instances percentages do not add up to 100. This is because all statements were not graded by all respondents. However the number of omissions were very small.)



Assessors Views of Criteria Under Consideration at  
Divisional Promotion Boards for Sergeants Seeking Promotion  
to Inspector

Of the 119 questionnaires distributed, 92 were completed and returned, a response rate of 77.3%. Of the respondents, 7 were Chief Superintendents which represents 53.8% of the total in that group, 34 were Superintendents which represents 80.9% of the total in that group and 48 were Chief Inspectors which represents 75% of the total in that group.(3 respondents did not give their rank)

STATEMENT 1

The first impression created by a candidate at a promotion board will be influential in determining whether or not he or she passes the board."

51.1% of respondents partially agreed with this statement. Coupled with the 14.1% who agreed with it there is clearly a feeling amongst promotion board assessors that first impressions created by a candidate are influential. Non parametric 'T' Test data indicates that Chief Superintendents who responded had a greater propensity to disagree with this statement than did Superintendents or Chief Inspectors. The overall spread of views on Statement 1 produced a standard deviation of 1.172.

## STATEMENT 2

"A candidate is more likely to be successful at a promotion board if he or she has wide-ranging operational policing experience."

49.9% of respondents agreed with this statement and 38% partially agreed with it. This wide ranging agreement emphasises the store placed on operational policing experience by assessors at Promotion Boards. Non Parametric 'T' Test evaluation of the response data indicates that the level of agreement with this statement is inversely proportional to the seniority of the respondent; Chief Superintendents disagreeing with it more than Superintendents who disagree more than Chief Inspectors.

## STATEMENT 3

"The overall performance of a candidate at a promotion board will be a crucial factor in determining whether he or she passes the board."

30.4% of respondents agreed with this statement and 42.4% partially agreed with it, whilst 17.4% and 3.3% partially disagreed and disagreed with it, respectively. There is some evidence (NPTT analysis) to indicate that Chief Superintendents are slightly less in agreement with the statement than Superintendents or Chief Inspectors. The spread of views concerning this statement is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.153.

#### STATEMENT 4

"A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he or she has attempted to achieve regular movement between departments is likely to pass the board."

A significant proportion of respondents, 28.3%, neither agree nor disagree with this statement. Of the other respondents, there is a fairly even distribution of views albeit, slightly more officers disagree or partially disagree with the statement than agree or partially agree with it. Non parametric 'T' Test evaluation of the results indicates that Superintendents agree with the statement far more than Chief Superintendents or Chief Inspectors. The 'T' Test data has a significance level of 0.0647 and it is possible that had the sample been larger, these data would have been "Significant". The spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.160.

#### STATEMENT 5

"Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they are confident individuals are likely to pass the board."

55.4% of respondents partially agree with this statement. This figure coupled with the 22.8% of respondents who agree with it indicates that confidence is a criterion much in demand in the successful divisional promotion board candidate. Kruskal-Wallis

analysis of the data indicates a small degree of inverse proportionality between the level of agreement with the statement and the seniority of the respondent. More senior officers tend to disagree to a larger extent than do Junior Officers. The distribution of views produced a standard deviation of 1.079.

#### STATEMENT 6

"Answering promotion board questions in a manner which indicates an in-depth knowledge of the subject on which the question is based, is likely to lead to a candidate passing the board."

Respondents predominantly agreed with this statement. 43.5% partially and 42% fully. However, 5.4% and 2.2% partially disagreed and disagreed with it, respectively. Non Parametric 'T' Test evaluation of the data shows a fairly consistent level of views across ranks. The narrow spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.944.

#### STATEMENT 7

"A candidate who indicates to a board that he is willing to work in an area of the force other than that where he is currently stationed on promotion is more likely to pass the board."

Views in relation to this statement are diverse. 13% agreed, 40.2% partially agreed, 12% partially disagreed and 18.5% disagreed. The data reveals a standard deviation of 1.331. What is interesting is the variation in views across ranks, which the Kruskal Wallis analysis shows is statistically significant at a level of 0.0424. Chief Superintendents are less in agreement with the statement than Superintendents, who in turn are less in agreement with it than Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 8

"The candidate who looks like a police Inspector is likely to pass the board."

There is predominantly disagreement with this statement (19.6% partially disagree, 34.8% disagree), although a significant proportion of respondents neither agree nor disagree with it (20.7%). Non parametric 'T' Test analysis shows that views are fairly homogeneous across ranks.

#### STATEMENT 9

"Candidates who are able to demonstrate to a promotion board that they are determined to achieve promotion are likely to pass the board."

There is quite a spread of opinion amongst respondents concerning this statement, indicated by a standard deviation of 1.264. 12.8% agree, 33.7% partially agree, 20.7% partially disagree and 14.1% disagree. Chief Superintendents are slightly less in agreement with the statement than are Superintendents and Chief Inspectors who seem to show roughly the same level of agreement. (Non Parametric 'T' Test).

#### STATEMENT 10

"Candidates who are in the latter one-third of their probable police service are less likely to pass a promotion board than candidates in the first two thirds of their service."

54% of respondents disagree or partially disagree with this statement, whilst 31.5% agree or partially agree with it. Non parametric 'T' test evaluation of these data shows that Chief Superintendents disagree with the statement more than Superintendents and Chief Inspectors. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.377.

#### STATEMENT 11

"Demonstration of a good knowledge of the work and responsibilities of the rank to which a candidate is aspiring would make him or her likely to pass the board."

There is very wide agreement with this statement, 92.4% of the respondents, either agree or partially agree with it. The narrow focus of opinion is expressed in a standard deviation of 0.774. Kruskal Wallis analysis shows that Chief Superintendents tend to be more in disagreement with the statement than are Superintendents who in turn disagree with it more than Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 12

"Evidence that a candidate possesses good communication skills would make him or her likely to pass a promotion board."

There is broad agreement with this statement, 87% of respondents either agree or partially agree with it and only 4.3% partially disagree or disagree with it. The Non Parametric 'T' Test shows that views are homogeneous across ranks. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 0.769.

#### STATEMENT 13

"A complete absence of acting-up experience would make a candidate unlikely to pass a promotion board."

Nearly 60% of respondents disagree or partially disagree with this statement, whilst 25% express some agreement with it. Chief Superintendents according to the Non Parametric 'T' Test data are

more in agreement with it than Superintendents and Chief Inspectors. A standard deviation of 1.32 shows that there is a spread of views in relation to "acting-up" experience.

#### STATEMENT 14

"Too repressive or too laissez-faire an attitude towards enforcing discipline would make a candidate unlikely to pass a promotion board."

75% of respondents agree or partially agree with this statement and 14.2% partially disagree or disagree with it. Chief Superintendents according to the Kruskal Wallis analysis disagree with it more than do Superintendents or Chief Inspectors. The breadth of views concerning this statement produced a standard deviation of 1.129.

#### STATEMENT 15

"Enthusiasm in relation to day to day police work, coupled with an energetic approach to life in general, would make a candidate likely to pass a promotion board."

91% of respondents agreed or partially agreed with this statement. The Non Parametric 'T' Test data shows that the level of disagreement was proportional to the seniority of the respondents i.e. Chief Superintendents disagreed with it more



than did Superintendents who in turn disagreed with it more than Chief Inspectors. The narrow focus of opinion in relation to this statement is reflected in a standard deviation of 0.770.

#### STATEMENT 16

"Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they have gained some unusual policing experience, that other candidates have not, e.g. a secondment to the R.U.C., would be likely to pass the board."

Views in relation to the statement vary quite markedly as evidenced by the standard deviation of 1.197. 6.5% agree, 34.8% partially agree, 18.5% partially disagree and 15.2% disagree. Chief Superintendents tend to disagree with it more than Superintendents or Chief Inspectors (Non Parametric 'T' Test).

#### STATEMENT 17

"Extensive acting-up experience would make a candidate likely to pass a promotion board."

60% of respondents agree or partially agree with this statement and 23.9% partially disagree or disagree with it. The spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.245. There is a high level of consistency across ranks indicated by the Non Parametric 'T' Test.

#### STATEMENT 18

"Candidates who are able to demonstrate to a promotion board that they have had work experience outside the police service - particularly in a supervisory capacity - would be more likely to pass the board than candidates whose only work experience was policing."

There is a broad spread of views concerning this statement indicated by a standard deviation of 1.362. 5.4% agree, 29.3% partially agree, 19.6% partially disagree and 33.7% disagree. The divergence of views is homogeneous across ranks as evidenced by the Kruskal-Wallis analysis.

#### STATEMENT 19

"Evidence that a candidate is mature in attitude is likely to result in him or her passing a promotion board."

80.4% of respondents agree or partially agree with this statement and only 8.7% partially disagree or disagree with it. Non Parametric 'T' Test data indicates that Chief Superintendents and Superintendents are less in agreement with it than are Chief Inspectors. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 0.972.

Candidates Perception of Criteria Under Consideration At  
Divisional Promotion Boards for Sergeants Seeking Promotion  
To Inspector

Of the 224 questionnaires distributed, 118 were completed and returned, a response rate of 52.6%. Of the respondents, 38 were candidates who passed the last Divisional Promotion Board and 75 were candidates who failed. 5 respondents did not indicate whether they passed or failed their last board.

STATEMENT 1

A candidate is more likely to pass a promotion board if he or she has had C.I.D. experience."

59% of respondents were in agreement or partial agreement with this statement, whilst 30% of respondents partially disagreed or disagreed with it. This spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.407. Non parametric 'T' Test data shows that views are consistent amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

## STATEMENT 2

"A candidate who possesses an approachable personality is more likely to pass a promotion board."

59% of respondents either agree or partially agree with this statement. 20% of respondents partially disagree or disagree with it. It is noticeable that 20.5% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. The divergence of opinion amongst respondents is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.281. Kruskal-Wallis analysis indicates a remarkably close correlation of views between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

## STATEMENT 3

"Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they have a settled domestic background are more likely to pass the board."

As in statements 1 and 2, 59% of respondents either partially agreed or agreed with this statement, whilst 22% partially disagreed or disagreed with it. 18.8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. These varying views produced a standard deviation of 1.267. Non parametric 'T' Test data from Kruskal-Wallis analysis indicates that unsuccessful candidates were slightly less in agreement with this statement than successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 4

"An ability to motivate others will make a candidate more likely to pass a promotion board."

75.2% of respondents agreed or partially agreed with this statement. This high level of agreement is even more stark when one considers that only 13% of respondents partially disagreed or disagreed with this statement. The spread of views is illustrated by a standard deviation of 1.267. Non parametric 'T' Test data indicates similar views amongst unsuccessful and successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 5

"Candidates who possess a charismatic personality are more likely to pass a promotion board."

There is predominant agreement with this statement illustrated by the 66.4% of respondents who either partially agreed or agreed with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.135. The remarkable aspect concerning this statement is the different views held by Candidates who were successful as opposed to those who were unsuccessful. Kruskal-Wallis analysis shows that successful candidates were far more inclined to disagree with this statement than were those who were unsuccessful (significant to the level 0.0034).

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|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.  | Officers who are members of influential organisations outside the police service are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who are not members.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7.  | Officers who hold a degree are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who do not hold a degree.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8.  | An officer who has been divorced is less likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is married or has never been married.                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9.  | Officers who exhibit an ability to naturally lead by example are more likely to pass a promotion board than officers who do not possess such an ability.                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | Officers who are related to senior officers are more likely to pass a promotion board than officers who do not have relatives in senior positions.                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | An officer who demonstrates that he is effective practically is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer whose abilities do not lie in the practical sphere. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | An officer who is a strong character is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer whose character is less strong.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 13. | An officer who is popular amongst his colleagues is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less popular.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | The age of an officer when he joined the police service will have an influence on whether he will be successful at a promotion board.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | An officer who exhibits sound judgement in operational situations is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less able in this facet of police work.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

#### STATEMENT 8

"Individuals who demonstrate that they are self confident are more likely to pass a promotion board."

There was a high level of agreement with this statement, with 93.2% of respondents either agreeing with it or partially agreeing with it. However, non parametric 'T' Test data shows to a significance level of 0.0185 that successful candidates at the last Board were far less in agreement with this statement than were those who were unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 9

"Candidates who have gained wide ranging varied police experience are more likely to pass a promotion board."

71.8% of respondents either partially agreed or agreed with this statement, whereas only 17% of respondents partially disagreed or disagreed with it. The divergence of views produced a standard deviation of 0.109 and non parametric 'T' Test data shows remarkably similar views are held by candidates who were successful and unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 10

"A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he or she is highly ambitious is likely to pass the board."

13.5% of respondents agreed with this statement whilst 12.9% disagreed with it. However, by far the largest group of respondents (33.9%) were partially in agreement. Standard Deviation calculations of the data produced a reading of 1.233. Kruskal-Wallis analysis indicated that successful candidates are more inclined to disagree with this statement than unsuccessful candidates. The significance of this result was at a level of 0.0588 and had the sample been larger or more responses been received it is quite possible that this significance level would have dropped below 0.05.

#### STATEMENT 11

"Candidates who are excitable characters are unlikely to pass a promotion board."

58.6% of respondents agreed or partially agreed with this statement whilst 23.3% disagreed or partially disagreed with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.189. Non parametric 'T' Test data reveals that ideas are consistent amongst candidates who were both successful and unsuccessful at the last Divisional Promotion Board.



#### STATEMENT 12

"A Candidate who demonstrates to a promotion board that he holds firm ideas and is not easily swayed is more likely to pass the board."

Respondents in the main agreed or partially agreed with this statement (65.5%). Only a small percentage of those who responded disagreed (8%). The spread of views is illustrated by a standard deviation of 1.236. There is a high degree of consistency of ideas between candidates who were successful and unsuccessful at the last board.

#### STATEMENT 13

"Candidates who are boisterous characters are more likely to pass a promotion board."

The largest group of respondents in relation to this statement were those who neither agreed nor disagreed with it (36.2%). However, of the remainder the majority tended to disagree or partially disagree with it. A standard deviation calculation of 1.187 is indicative of the spread of views. Differences in opinion between candidates who were successful and those who were unsuccessful are minimal as indicated by the non-parametric 'T' test data.

#### STATEMENT 14

"Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they possess initiative are more likely to pass the board."

84.5% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement. Only 7.7% of respondents showed any level of disagreement with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.023. There is a high degree of correlation between the views of those candidates who were successful and unsuccessful (NPTT).

#### STATEMENT 15

"An ability to make sound decisions based upon rational thinking is likely to make a candidate successful at a promotion board."

64.7% of respondents were in agreement with this statement and 20.7% in partial agreement. Only 5.2% showed any level of disagreement whatsoever. The high level of agreement with this statement is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.952. Candidates who were unsuccessful at the board were slightly more inclined to disagree with this statement than candidates who were successful (NPTT).

#### STATEMENT 16

"Candidates who can convince a promotion board that they are individuals who are highly motivated are likely to pass the board."

76.7% of respondents agree or partially agree with this statement whilst only 11.2% disagree or partially disagree with it. The data produced a standard deviation calculation of 1.149 and non parametric 'T' Test information reveals that successful and unsuccessful candidates hold similar views.

#### STATEMENT 17

"Candidates who possess a wide range of abilities are more likely to be successful at a promotion board."

Once again the majority of respondents agreed or partially agreed with this statement (69%) although the standard deviation of 1.126 indicated some disagreement with it. Views were consistent between candidates who were successful and unsuccessful at the last board.

#### STATEMENT 18

"Candidates who can satisfy a promotion board that they possess leadership ability are more likely to be successful."

85.3% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement whilst only 5.1% showed any level of disagreement. The grouping of responses is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.975. Kruskal-Wallis Analysis reveals that candidates who were unsuccessful at the last board were slightly less in agreement with the statement than candidates who were successful.

#### STATEMENT 19

"Candidates who convince a promotion board that they are reliable individuals are more likely to pass the board."

The main body of opinion in relation to this statement was in favour with 70.7% of respondents either agreeing or partially agreeing. Only 12.9% disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement and there was a spread of views which produced a standard deviation of 1.248. Candidates who were unsuccessful at the last board were more inclined to disagree with the statement than candidates who were successful (NPTT).

#### STATEMENT 20

"A promotion board candidate's length of service will be an important factor in determining whether he or she passes the board."

A wide range of views prevailed in relation to this statement. 19% of respondents agreeing with it, 25% partially agreeing, 15.5% neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 17.2% partially disagreeing and 23.3% disagreeing with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.460. There was a close correlation between the views of candidates who were successful and unsuccessful (NPTT).

#### STATEMENT 21

"Candidates who demonstrate to a board that they have a good theoretical knowledge of policing are more likely to pass the board."

24.6% of respondents agreed with this statement, whilst 38.1% partially agreed with it. 9.3% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 9.3% partially disagreed with it. 17.8% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.225. NPTT analysis showed a remarkably high correlation between the views of successful and unsuccessful candidates at the last divisional promotion board.

#### STATEMENT 22

"Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they are dedicated to the police service are more likely to pass the board."

16.9% of respondents agreed with this statement and 28% partially agreed with it. 16.9% disagreed with this statement, whilst 11% partially disagreed with it. A large group, 26.3%, neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Standard deviation calculations on these data produced a result of 1.322. NPTT analysis showed that successful and unsuccessful candidates had similar views.

#### STATEMENT 23

"Candidates who convince a promotion board that they are adaptable are more likely to pass the board."

27.1% of respondents agreed with this statement and 30.5% partially agreed with it. 8.5% disagreed with this statement and 8.5% partially disagreed with it. Again, a large group, 24.6%, neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The spread produced a standard deviation of 1.218 and NPTT analysis showed similar views amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates at the last board.

#### STATEMENT 24

"A candidate who is willing to accept the judgements made of him by others is more likely to pass a promotion board."

The largest group in relation to this statement were those who neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, 34.7%. 5.9% agreed with this statement and 17.8% partially agreed with it. 18.6% disagreed with this statement and 22% partially disagreed with it. Standard deviation calculations produced a reading of 1.147. NPTT analysis showed that unsuccessful candidates at the last divisional promotion board were more in disagreement with this statement than were successful candidates. The NPTT results were to a significance level of 0.0698, and had the sample been larger, this result may have been significant.

#### STATEMENT 25

"The age of a candidate appearing before a promotion board will be influential in determining whether he or she is successful."

21.2% of respondents agreed with this statement, whilst 27.1% partially agreed with it. 13.6% disagreed and 13.6% partially disagreed with it. 23.7% neither agreed nor disagreed. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.320 and NPTT analysis showed very similar views amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates at the last board.

#### STATEMENT 26

"A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he carries out his policing duties with professionalism is more likely to pass the board."

45.8% of respondents agreed with this statement and 30.5% partially agreed with it. 7.6% disagreed with this statement and 6.8% partially disagreed with it. 8.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. Standard deviation calculations on these data produced a reading of 1.235. NPTT analysis showed that unsuccessful candidates were more in disagreement with this statement than were successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 27

"Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they have the ability to generate enthusiasm in others are more likely to pass the board."

44.9% of respondents agreed with this statement and 25.4% partially agreed with it. 10.2% disagreed with the statement and 6.8% partially disagreed with it. 11.9% neither agreed nor disagreed. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.331, and NPTT analysis showed that unsuccessful candidates were a little more in disagreement with the statement than were successful candidates.



STATEMENT 28

"Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they are perceptive are more likely to pass the board."

27.1% of respondents agreed with this statement and 34.7% partially agreed with it. Only 6.8% disagreed with this statement and 5.9% partially disagreed with it. A large group, 23.7%, neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.142, and NPTT analysis showed more or less similar views between successful and unsuccessful candidates at the last promotion board.

STATEMENT 29

"Candidates who have the ability to accurately assess others are more likely to pass a promotion board."

20.3% of respondents agreed with this statement and 28% partially agreed with it. 16.1% disagreed with this statement, whilst 11% partially disagreed with it. 23.7% neither agreed nor disagreed with it. Standard deviation calculations on these data produced a reading of 1.346, and NPTT analysis showed fairly similar views between successful and unsuccessful candidates at the last board.

Assessors views of criteria under consideration at  
Divisional Promotion Boards for Constables  
seeking promotion to Sergeant.

Of the 119 Questionnaires distributed, 77 were completed and returned, a response rate of 64.7%. Of the respondents, 10 were Chief Superintendents, which represents 76.9% of the total in that group, 27 were Superintendents, which represents 64% of the total in that group, and 40 were Chief Inspectors which represents 62.5% of the total in that group.

STATEMENT 1

"A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he is able to express himself well orally is likely to pass the board."

60.3% of respondents were in partial agreement with this statement, whilst 15.4% agreed with it. Only 12.8% of respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with this statement. Non Parametric 'T' Test evaluation indicates that Chief Superintendents were more inclined to disagree with the statement than were Superintendents who in turn, were more inclined to disagree with the statement than were Chief Inspectors. The spread of views in relation to this statement is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.018.

## STATEMENT 2

"A candidate who convinces a promotion board that he is determined to pass the board is likely to succeed."

There was quite a spread of views in relation to this statement, with 34.6% of respondents partially agreeing and 6.4% agreeing, whilst 16.7% partially disagreed and 20.5% disagreed. This variation in views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.30. Also of interest is the 20.5% of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. NPTT evaluation shows that there was a high level of similar thinking across ranks with Chief Superintendents being slightly less in agreement than Superintendents who in turn, were slightly less in agreement than Chief Inspectors.

## STATEMENT 3

"An ability to get on with other people is likely to lead to a candidate passing a promotion board."

6.4% of those who returned the questionnaires agreed with this statement, and 34.6% partially agreed. 14.1% partially disagreed and 12.8% disagreed. Perhaps of greatest significance is the 32.1% of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed.

The spread of views regarding this statement is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.12% NPTT data indicates a level of

agreement which is almost identical between Superintendents and Chief Inspectors. However, Chief Superintendents are slightly more in agreement with the statement than their subordinate ranks.

#### STATEMENT 4

"Evidence that a candidate possesses good leadership skills is likely to lead to him being successful at a promotion board."

The level of agreement regarding this statement was so high that all respondents either agreed or partially agreed with it. This almost unanimity of thinking is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.493. Whilst accepting the high level of agreement, it is interesting to note, as indicated by the NPTT data, that Chief Inspectors were more in agreement with this statement than were Superintendents who in turn, were more in agreement with it than were Chief Superintendents.

#### STATEMENT 5

"A candidate is likely to pass a promotion board if he has wide ranging policing experience."

The high level of agreement with this statement is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.897. 87.2% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement. Only 9% of respondents disagreed or partially disagreed with it. NPTT data shows a fairly consistent view point across ranks, albeit, Superintendents were slightly more in agreement with this statement than were Chief Inspectors or Chief Superintendents.

#### STATEMENT 6

"A candidate who convinces a promotion board that he has a high level of professional knowledge is likely to pass the board."

Again, a relatively low standard deviation of 0.716 indicates fairly consistent views amongst assessors. 89.8% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement and whilst nobody disagreed with it, 3.8% of respondents partially disagreed. What is interesting is that Chief Superintendents disagreed with this statement far more than did Superintendents who in turn, disagreed with it more than did Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 7

"A candidate who demonstrates to a promotion board that he has good reasoning powers which enable him to make balanced judgements is likely to pass the board."

Again, the high level of consistent thinking amongst assessors is indicated by a standard deviation of 0.617. None of the respondents disagreed with this statement and only 1.30% partially disagreed with it. 96.2% either agreed or partially agreed with this statement. Of particular interest is the variation of views across ranks. NPTT data provides information at a significance level of 0.0516, which shows that Chief Superintendents disagreed with this statement slightly more than Superintendents who in turn, disagreed with it substantially more than Chief Inspectors. The level of significance is so close to the critical value of 0.05 so as to make these data of particular importance. There is every prospect, had the sample been larger, that the significance level would have dropped below 0.05.

#### STATEMENT 8

"An ability to grasp issues quickly is likely to make a candidate successful at a promotion board."

44.9% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 33.3% agreed with it, whilst only 6.2% of respondents either partially disagreed or disagreed with the statement. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 0.939. NPTT data showed a relatively consistent level of opinion across ranks, albeit Chief Inspectors were more inclined to agree with this statement than were Superintendents or Chief Superintendents.

#### STATEMENT 9

"Fluency in a Foreign Language is likely to be influential in determining whether a candidate passes a promotion board."

65.4% of respondents disagreed with this statement and only 1.3% agreed with it. 14.1% partially disagreed and 5.1% partially agreed. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 0.995. Views across ranks were fairly consistent, although NPTT evaluation showed Superintendents to be slightly more in agreement with the statement than were Chief Superintendents or Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 10

"A candidate's level of academic qualifications is likely to be influential in determining whether he passes a promotion board."

34.6% of respondents partially agreed with the statement and 10.3% agreed with it. However, 19.2% of respondents partially disagreed with the statement and 7.7% disagreed. Perhaps of greatest significance, 28.2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. NPTT data showed that Chief Superintendents and Chief Inspectors are more in agreement with this statement than are Superintendents. The spread of views as indicated by standard deviation is 1.109.

#### STATEMENT 11

"Candidates who demonstrate a high level of intellectual ability are likely to pass a promotion board."

39.7% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 9% agreed with it. However, 12.8% partially disagreed with this statement and 12.8% disagreed with it. Worthy of note are the 25.6% of respondents who neither agreed or disagreed. This spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.174. NPTT data indicates that Superintendents and Chief Inspectors are more inclined to disagree with this statement than are Chief Superintendents.

#### STATEMENT 12

"A candidate's track record of commitment to the Service is likely to be influential in determining whether he passes a promotion board."

47.4% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 20.5% agreed with it. 10.8% partially disagreed with this statement, whilst 3.8% disagreed with it. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.033. NPTT data shows a remarkably high level of agreement regarding this statement across ranks.



### STATEMENT 13

"A self confident candidate is likely to be successful at a promotion board."

61.5% of respondents either partially agreed or agreed with this statement, whilst only 14.1% partially disagreed or disagreed with it. Quite a sizeable proportion i.e. 24.4% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. The variation in views is portrayed in a standard deviation of 0.989. NPTT analysis shows a relatively consistent view point across ranks.

### STATEMENT 14

"Candidates who demonstrate that they have a good knowledge of topical policing issues are likely to be successful at a promotion board."

50% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 17.9% agreed with it. Only 9% of respondents partially disagreed or disagreed with this statement, whilst 23.1% neither agreed nor disagreed with it. The high level of agreement with this statement is indicated by a relatively small standard deviation of 0.885. NPTT data shows that the level of agreement with this statement is inversely proportional to the seniority of the officer concerned. Chief Superintendents being more in disagreement with the statement than Superintendents, who are in turn, more in disagreement with it than Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 15

"A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he is mature is likely to pass the board."

Over a quarter of respondents, 25.6%, neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. However, 59% either partially agreed or agreed with it, whilst only 15.4% partially disagreed or disagreed with the statement. These results produced a standard deviation of 0.908. NPTT data shows a high level of agreement across ranks.

#### STATEMENT 16

"An extrovert character is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an introvert character."

29.5% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 26.9% agreed with it. However, 16.7% partially disagreed with the statement and 5.1% disagreed. 21.8% neither agreed nor disagreed. This spread of views produced a relatively high standard deviation of 1.202. NPTT analysis shows that Chief Superintendents are more in disagreement with the statement than are Superintendents who in turn, are more in disagreement than Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 17

"A candidate who is able to make an accurate assessment of his own ability is more likely to be successful at a promotion board."

The result which strikes one regarding this statement is the 37.2% of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. 44.9% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with the statement, whilst 17.9% partially disagreed or disagreed with it. These figures produce a standard deviation of 1.030. NPTT analysis shows that Chief Superintendents and Chief Inspectors shared a similar level of agreement with the statement. However, Superintendents were appreciably more in disagreement with the statement than their colleagues.

#### STATEMENT 18

"Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they are able to accept criticism are likely to pass the board."

By far the largest group of respondents, 42.3% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. 26.9% either agreed or partially agreed with it, whilst 30.8% partially disagreed or disagreed with the statement. These data produced a standard deviation of 1.093. Although not to a great extent, Chief Superintendents were more in disagreement with the statement than were Superintendents or Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 19

"A candidates level of enthusiasm towards his job is likely to be influential in determining whether he will pass a promotion board."

57.7% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 19.2% agreed with it. Disagreement with this statement was limited to 3.8% of respondents partially disagreeing and 3.8% disagreeing. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 0.914. NPTT analysis shows a relatively homogenous view point across ranks.

#### STATEMENT 20

"Candidates who possess good communication skills are likely to be successful at a promotion board."

None of the respondents disagreed with the statement and only 2.6% partially disagreed with it. 85.9% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement. This high level of agreement produced a low standard deviation of 0.750. Of interest is the NPTT data which is significant to a level of 0.0519, which indicates that Chief Superintendents were slightly more in disagreement with the statement than were Superintendents who in turn, were substantially more in disagreement with it than were Chief Inspectors. Had the sample size been larger, it is

quite possible the level of significance will have dropped below the crucial 0.05 level.

#### STATEMENT 21

"Candidates who have had experience in the C.I.D. are likely to be successful at a promotion board."

37.2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. However, 34.6% either agreed or partially agreed with it, whilst 28.2% either disagreed or partially disagreed with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.122. Again NPTT data showed that Chief Superintendents and Superintendents were more likely to disagree with the statement than were Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 22

"Candidates who have served in H.M. Armed Forces prior to joining the Police Service are likely to be successful at a promotion board."

None of the respondents agreed with this statement. However, very nearly 40% neither agreed nor disagreed with it. 20.5% were in partial agreement, whilst 17.9% were in partial disagreement. 21.8% of respondents were in disagreement with this statement. These views produced a standard deviation of 1.050. NPTT

analysis shows that Chief Superintendents were more in disagreement with the statement than were Superintendents who in turn, were more in disagreement with it than were Chief Inspectors.

#### STATEMENT 23

"Candidates who have held a supervisory responsibility in some form of employment outside the Police Service are likely to pass a promotion board."

2.6% of respondents agreed with this statement. The remainder of the respondents held views which were fairly evenly distributed over the remaining response possibilities. 24.4% partially agreed with this statement, 28.2% neither agreed nor disagreed with it, 20.5% partially disagreed with this statement and 24.4% disagreed with it. These views produced a standard deviation of 1.177.

#### STATEMENT 24

"Male candidates are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than female candidates."

38.5% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 20.5% partially disagreed. However, 7.7% agreed with it and 15.4% partially agreed with it. The spread of views is indicated by a

standard deviation of 1.335. NPTT data shows that views are fairly consistent across ranks.

STATEMENT 25

"Written reports upon a candidates' suitability for promotion are likely to be influential in determining whether he or she passes a promotion board."

84.6% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement, whilst only 5.2% disagreed or partially disagreed with it. This concentration of views produced a standard deviation of 0.913. NPTT data shows remarkably similar views across ranks.

STATEMENT 26

"A candidate who has reached the limit of his capacity and shows no potential is unlikely to pass a promotion board."

Perhaps unusually, only 55.1% of respondents agreed with this statement. 10.3% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 12.8 partially disagreed with it. The spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.432. Once again NPTT data shows similar views across ranks.

#### STATEMENT 27

"Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they have a track record of application to duty are more likely to pass the board."

47.4% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 15.4% agreed with it. Only 12.8% of respondents either disagreed or partially disagreed with this statement. However, 24.4% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.037, and NPTT data showed fairly consistent views across ranks, although Chief Inspectors tended to agree with the statement slightly more than did Superintendents or Chief Superintendents.

#### STATEMENT 28

"A candidate's own belief in his readiness for promotion will be influential in determining whether he passes the board."

This statement produced wide variations of opinion, 15.4% of respondents agreed with it, 19.2% partially agreed with it, 15.4% partially disagreed with it and 21.8% disagreed with it. The largest group of respondents, 28.2%, neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.360. NPTT analysis showed consistency of views across ranks.



STATEMENT 29

"A candidate who performs well at a promotion board interview is likely to pass the board."

Respondents predominantly agreed with this statement. 46.2% partially and 25.6% completely. However, 7.7% partially disagreed with it and 6.4% disagreed with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.116. NPTT data showed that support for the statement was inversely proportional to the seniority of the respondents, Chief Superintendents being more in disagreement with it than Superintendents, who in turn, were more in disagreement with it than Chief Inspectors.

STATEMENT 30

"A candidate who does not fit a promotion board chairman's expectations of an officer who is suitable for promotion is unlikely to pass the board."

46.2% of respondents agreed with this statement and 21.8% partially agreed with it. 9% partially disagreed with it, and 15.4% disagreed with it. The variation of views produced a standard deviation of 1.498. NPTT data produced evidence to a significance level of 0.0040, which showed that Chief Superintendents and Superintendents were far more in disagreement with the statement than were Chief Inspectors.

Candidates Perceptions of Criteria Under Consideration At  
Divisional Promotion Boards for Constables Seeking  
Promotion To Sergeant

Of the 276 questionnaires distributed, 142 were completed and returned, a response rate of 51.4%. Of the respondents, 70 were candidates who passed the last Divisional Promotion Board and 69 were candidates who failed. 3 respondents did not indicate whether they passed or failed their last board.

STATEMENT 1

"An officer who has served in an operational support unit is more likely to be successful at a Divisional Promotion Board Interview than an officer who has not."

The largest group of respondents partially disagreed with this statement (46.9%) although surprisingly only 1.4% disagreed with it. 16.5% of respondents either partially agreed or agreed with this statement and 27.6% neither agreed nor disagreed with it. The spread of views is indicated by a standard deviation of 1.308. Non parametric 'T' Test data indicates that candidates who were successful at the last Divisional Promotion Board were

noticeably more inclined to disagree with this statement than were candidates who were unsuccessful.

These data were significant at a level of 0.0127.

#### STATEMENT 2

"The length of time that an officer has been in the police service will have a marked effect on the likelihood of him or her passing a divisional promotion board irrespective of other factors."

40% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 17.9% agreed with it. However, 24.8% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 8.30% partially disagreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.490. Non parametric 'T' Test Data shows that views were fairly consistent between candidates who were successful at the board and those who were unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 3

"An officer who has served in H.M. Armed Forces prior to joining the police service is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is otherwise similarly qualified for promotion but who has not been in the Armed Forces."

The largest group of respondents, 39.5%, disagreed with this statement and 14.5% partially disagreed with it. 20.7% partially agreed with this statement and 6.9% agreed with it. 17.2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. The spread of views produce a standard deviation of 1.375. Non parametric 'T' Test Data showed consistent views between candidates who were successful and those who were unsuccessful at the last Divisional Promotion Board.

#### STATEMENT 4

"An officer who is coloured is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is white."

57.9% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement. 22.1% disagreed with it and 9% partially disagreed with it. These views produced a standard deviation of 1.550. Non parametric 'T' Test Data showed that candidates who were successful at the last Divisional Promotion Board were more in disagreement with this statement than were candidates who were unsuccessful. These results were at a significance level of 0.0069.

#### STATEMENT 5

"Officers who have had experience of policing ethnic minority communities are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who have not had such experience."

31% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 13.1% agreed with it. Nevertheless 25.5% disagreed with this statement and 6.9% partially disagreed with it. 21.4% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. Standard deviation calculations for the spread of views produced a result of 1.407. Non parametric 'T' Test data showed that views were fairly consistent between those candidates who were successful at the last Board and those who were unsuccessful, albeit, successful candidates tended to disagree with this statement slightly more than candidates who were unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 6

"Officers who are members of influential organisations outside the police service are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who are not members."

66.9% of respondents either agreed or partially agreed with this statement, whereas only 20% of respondents either partially disagreed or disagreed with it. These results produce a standard deviation of 1.362. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed that

views were fairly consistent across rank although unsuccessful candidates were slightly more in agreement with this statement than were successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 7

"Officers who hold a degree are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who do not hold a degree."

41.4% of respondents agreed with this statement and 38.6% partially agreed with it. Only 6.9% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 5.5% partially disagreed. Standard deviation calculations produced a value of 1.159. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed that successful candidates at the last Divisional Promotion Board were more inclined to disagree with this statement than were unsuccessful candidates although not at a significant level.

#### STATEMENT 8

"An officer who has been divorced is less likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is married or has never been married."

22.1% of respondents partially agreed with this statement and 8.3% agreed with it. 27.6% disagreed with this statement and 15.2% partially disagreed with it. A substantial number of

respondents, 25.5% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. The data produced a standard deviation calculation of 1.319. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed that views were similar amongst candidates who were both successful and unsuccessful at the last Divisional Promotion Board.

#### STATEMENT 9

"Officers who exhibit an ability to naturally lead by example are more likely to pass a promotion board than officers who do not possess such an ability."

46.9% of respondents agreed with this statement and 25.5% partially agreed with it. Only 6.9% disagreed with this statement and 9.7% partially disagreed with it. These views produced a standard deviation of 1.267. Views were remarkably similar amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 10

"Officers who are related to senior officers are more likely to pass a promotion board than officers who do not have relatives in senior positions."

16.6% of candidates agreed with this statement and 36.6% partially agreed with it. 19.3% disagreed with this statement and 5.5% partially disagreed with it. 20.7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

The spread of views was represented by a standard deviation of 1.352. Candidates who were successful were shown by Non Parametric 'T' Test data analysis to be more in disagreement with this statement than the candidates who were unsuccessful. These results were significant (0.0469).

#### STATEMENT 11

"An officer who demonstrates that he is effective practically is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer whose abilities do not lie in the practical sphere."

32.4% of respondents partially agreed with this statement whilst 11% agreed with it, however, 24.8% disagreed with this statement and 14.5% partially disagreed with it. 15.2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. A standard deviation calculation of 1.396 was derived from the results. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed consistent views amongst both successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 12

"An officer who is a strong character is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer whose character is less strong."



53.1% of respondents agreed with this statement and 32.4% partially agreed with it. Only 4.1% disagreed with this statement and 2.1% partially disagreed. The clustering of views produced a standard deviation calculation of 0.993. Non Parametric 'T' Test analysis showed that views were fairly consistent between successful and unsuccessful candidates, although successful candidates were slightly more in disagreement with the statement than unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 13

"An officer who is popular amongst his colleagues is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less popular."

41.4% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 15.9% partially disagreed with it. Only 3.4% agreed with the statement and 16.6% partially agreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.256. Views were consistent amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 14

"The age of an officer when he joined the police service will have an influence on whether he will be successful at a promotion board."

9.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 25.5% partially agreed with it. However, 31.7% disagreed with this statement and 9.7% partially disagreed with it. A substantial proportion of respondents, 22.1% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. These calculations produced a standard deviation of 1.402. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed a close correlation between the views of successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 15

"An officer who exhibits sound judgement in operational situations is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less able in this facet of police work."

37.2% of respondents agreed with this statement and 23.4% partially agreed with it. However, 20% disagreed with this statement and 14.5% partially disagreed with it. This wide spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.591. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed an almost identical spread of views between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 16

"An officer who has a broad breadth of experience is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer whose experience is more specialised."

29.7% of candidates agreed with this statement and 29.7% partially agreed with it. Nevertheless 16.6% disagreed with this statement and 9.7% partially disagreed with it. This spread of views resulted in a standard deviation of 1.438. Non Parametric 'T' Test data showed that successful candidates were more inclined to agree with this statement than were unsuccessful candidates although not to a significant level.

#### STATEMENT 17

"An officer who possesses good communication skills is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is not a good communicator"

72.4% of respondents agreed with this statement and 21.4% partially agreed with it. Only 2.1% of candidates disagreed with this statement and 0.7% partially disagreed with it. This clustering of views resulted in a standard deviation of 0.756. Again Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed fairly consistent views amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 18

"An officer who has experience of the promotion board system is more likely to pass a board than an officer who is appearing for the first time."

27.6% of respondents agreed with this statement and 31.7% partially agreed with it. 20.7% disagreed with this statement and 7.6% partially disagreed with it. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.491. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed consistent views amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 19

"An officer who has C.I.D. experience is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who has no C.I.D. experience."

The largest group of respondents, 30.3% partially agreed with this statement whilst 21.7% agreed with it. 20% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 9.7% partially disagreed with it. This divergence of views produced a standard deviation of 1.429. Non Parametric 'T' Test Analysis showed to a level of significance of 0.008, that successful candidates at the last Divisional Promotion Board were more inclined to disagree with this statement than were unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 20

"An Officer who has expressed a willingness to move between divisions to broaden his policing experience is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who has chosen to remain in one division."

31.7% of respondents agreed with this statement whilst 29.7% partially agreed with it. 16.6% disagreed with this statement and 9.7% partially disagreed with it. The spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.457. Non Parametric 'T' Test Data showed to a significance level of 0.0013 that unsuccessful candidates were substantially more in disagreement with this statement than were successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 21

"Officers who possess an outgoing personality are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who have a more reserved personality."

40.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 34.5% partially agreed with it. Only 6.2% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 6.2% partially disagreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.163. NPTT analysis indicated that respondents who were successful at the last divisional promotion board were more in disagreement with this statement than were candidates who were unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 22

"A female officer is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than a male officer."

43.4% of respondents agreed with this statement and 22.6% partially agreed with it. This compares with 13.1% of respondents who disagreed with the statement and 9% who partially disagreed with it. Standard deviation calculations produced a result of 1.428. NPTT analysis showed fairly consistent views between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 23

"Officers who portray themselves as confident individuals are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who appear less naturally confident."

69.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 22.8% partially agreed with it. Only 1.4% disagreed with this statement and 2.1% partially disagreed with it. This clustering of views produced a standard deviation of 0.771. NPTT data showed a very close correlation of views between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 24

"A very ambitious officer is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less ambitious."

25.5% of respondents agreed with this statement and 35.2% partially agreed with it. 15.2% disagreed with the statement and 9% partially disagreed with it. Standard deviation calculations produced a result of 1.373. NPTT analysis showed an extremely high level of agreement between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 25

"Officers who make a conscious effort to secure a good rapport with senior officers are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who do not go out of their way to build up such a rapport."

33.8% of respondents agreed with this statement and 37.2% partially agreed with it. Only 7.6% disagreed with the statement and 8.3% partially disagreed with it. 11.7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.212. NPTT analysis showed that candidates who were successful at the last promotion board were more inclined to disagree with the statement than candidates who were unsuccessful at the last board.

#### STATEMENT 26

"An officer who is able to demonstrate discretion is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is lacking in this quality."

17.9% of respondents agreed with this statement, whilst 36.6% partially agreed with it. 22.1% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement whilst 11.7% disagreed with it and 10.3% partially disagreed with it. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.239. NPTT analysis showed that candidates who were successful at the last promotion board were more in agreement with the statement than were candidates who were unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 27

"An officer who is ruthless is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less ruthless."

The predominant proportion of respondents (30.3%) disagreed with this statement and 15.2% partially disagreed with it. In contrast, 11.7% agreed with the statement and 20% partially agreed with it. 21.4% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.403. NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.0051 that candidates who were successful at the last promotion board



were far more in disagreement with this statement than were candidates who were unsuccessful at the last board.

STATEMENT 28

"Once an officer has reached the latter years of his service he is less likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is younger in service."

29.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 23.4% partially agreed with it. 13.1% disagreed with this statement and 20.7% partially disagreed with it. 11.7% neither agreed nor disagreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.437. NPIT analysis showed a close correlation of views between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

STATEMENT 29

"An officer who is methodical regarding paperwork is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is slipshod."

37.9% of respondents agreed with this statement and 31.7% partially agreed with it. In contrast, 9% disagreed with this statement and 8.3% partially disagreed with it. 11.7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

Standard deviation calculations produced a result of 1.280. NPTT analysis showed a very high degree of agreement between successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 30

"Promiscuity by a female officer is likely to reduce her chances of success at a promotion board whereas promiscuity by a male officer is likely to have very little impact on his chances of success."

40.7% of respondents disagreed with this statement whilst 15.2% partially disagreed with it. In contrast, 9.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 17.2% partially agreed with it. 15.2% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.423. NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.0371 that successful candidates at the last promotion board were far more in disagreement with this statement than were unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 31

"An officer who is aggressive verbally to the public is less likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer whose verbal approach to the public is more sympathetic."

29.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 25.5% partially agreed with it. 11.7% of respondents disagreed with the statement and 9% partially disagreed with it. 22.8% neither agreed nor disagreed. This spread of views produced a standard deviation of 1.236. NPTT analysis showed that officers who were successful at the last divisional promotion board were more inclined to agree with this statement than officers who were unsuccessful.

#### STATEMENT 32

"A married officer with a stable family is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an unmarried officer."

30.3% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 9.7% partially disagreed with it. However, 17.9% agreed with this statement and 26.9% partially agreed with it. 13.8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. These wide ranging views produced a standard deviation of 1.529. NPTT analysis showed that unsuccessful candidates on the last divisional promotion board were more in disagreement with this statement than were successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 33

"An officer whose private life is outwardly respectable is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer whose private life is turbulent."

48.3% of respondents agreed with this statement and 29% partially agreed with it. 6.9% disagreed with the statement and 8.3% partially disagreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.235. NPTT analysis showed a fairly close correlation between views of successful candidates and unsuccessful candidates at the last divisional promotion board.

#### STATEMENT 34

"An officer who is determined to achieve promotion is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less resolute in his approach."

42.1% of respondents agreed with this statement and 29% partially agreed with it. 12.4% disagreed with the statement and 6.2% partially disagreed with it. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.377. NPTT analysis showed consistent views amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 35

"Once an officer has made a large number of appearances before a promotion board his chances of being successful begin to diminish."

24.1% of respondents agreed with this statement and 27.6% partially agreed with it. 17.9% of respondents disagreed with this statement and 17.9% partially disagreed with it. 11% neither agreed nor disagreed. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.460. NPTT analysis showed that views were similar amongst successful and unsuccessful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 36

"An officer who has a lot of uniform experience is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who only has limited uniform experience."

10.3% of respondents agreed with this statement, whilst 27.6% partially agreed with it. However, 27.6% disagreed with this statement and 20.7% partially disagreed with it. 12.4% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with it. Standard deviation calculations on these data produced a reading of 1.401. NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.0092 that unsuccessful candidates were much more inclined to disagree with this statement than were successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 37

"An officer who is actively supported for promotion by a senior officer is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who does not receive such support."

80.7% of respondents agreed with this statement and 14.5% disagreed with it. None of the respondents disagreed with the statement and only 0.7% partially disagreed with it. This clustering of views produced a standard deviation of 0.523. NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.0378 that unsuccessful candidates at the last divisional promotion board were more inclined to disagree with this statement than were successful candidates.

#### STATEMENT 38

"An officer who is interested and active in the crime aspects of police work is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is interested and active in other aspects of police work."

Only 6.2% of respondents agreed with this statement and 19.3% partially agreed with it. 26.9% disagreed with this statement, whilst 15.9% partially disagreed with it. However, the largest group of respondents, 30.3%, neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. These results produced a standard deviation of 1.250. NPTT analysis showed to a significance level of 0.0024 that candidates who were successful at the last divisional promotion board were much more inclined to disagree with this statement than were successful candidates.

STATEMENT 39

"An officer who is industrious in his approach to police work is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is less productive."

35.2% of respondents agreed with this statement and 27.6% partially agreed with it. 11.7% disagreed with the statement and 11.7% partially disagreed with it. 11.7% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Standard deviation calculations on these data produced a result of 1.386. NPTT analysis showed that views were similar amongst candidates who were successful and unsuccessful at the last divisional promotion board.

### QUALITATIVE DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Of the 92 questionnaires returned, only 10 contained any qualitative response in addition to the quantitative ranking of statements.

A Chief Inspector highlighted a view which I suspect is more widespread than the level of qualitative response suggests namely that the "esteem held for the candidates by divisional or departmental senior officers ..... will greatly influence the likelihood of success at a divisional promotion board."

A Chief Superintendent commented that he would be looking for "evidence of conscientiousness and perception and balance of operational and demonstrative competence .....", and also "evidence that the claims advanced by candidates ..... were in fact practised by him effectively and are not merely empty words ....."

A Superintendent touched on an aspect of selection which is extremely sensitive, namely reliance on good past performance as a sound indicator of future potential. He said "A candidate who demonstrates he understands the purpose and role of a supervisory rank is likely to strengthen his claim. Many candidates seem content to rely on spectacular past record of individual contributions to policing. They feel the supervisory rank is a recognition or reward for their individual performance."



Only one respondent directly questioned the validity of the selection interview as a reliable means of identifying potential, albeit his reference to the matter was somewhat oblique. He said "Staff appraisals over the past 3 years giving judgement on actual performance over such a long period is of more value than a 20 minute interview. Otherwise, only those good at interview get promoted which may not mean they are good at anything else." Other anecdotal comments made were concerned with matters that had already been covered in statements in the questionnaire and added little to the available quantitative data.

#### QUALITATIVE DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Of the 118 candidates who returned questionnaires, 59 included some element of qualitative response in addition to the ranking of questionnaires statements.

A thread which ran through many of the anecdotal comments was that educational qualifications are given undue favour by divisional promotion boards. 18 respondents referred directly to academic qualifications being of importance to a promotion board. Of these 18 respondents, 8 had been successful at the last divisional promotion board, and 10 unsuccessful.

Typical of the responses was one from an unsuccessful candidate who said "academic qualifications affect selection procedures regardless of the fact that this knowledge cannot be applied to practical policing."

Another unsuccessful candidate commented "A candidate having obtained a degree is not better qualified for promotion than officers not holding degree qualifications."

One unsuccessful candidate commented "I feel that too much is made of the studies which an officer is making i.e. Police or degree studies."

One unsuccessful candidate put the matter quite succinctly when he said "Officers with degrees are more likely to be promoted than those without."

One unsuccessful candidate who raised the matter of academic qualifications took a more philosophical approach when he said "..... good level of education, to enable an assimilation of modern trends and ideas."

Another area which produced comments from a number of respondents is the degree to which the views of an officer's Divisional Commander are influential in determining his success or failure at a promotion board.

One unsuccessful candidate made it quite clear that he felt that the "recommendation of candidates own Chief Superintendent "was of vital importance at a divisional promotion board."

Another put it quite strongly by saying "The overriding influence on the promotion board members is the opinion of the Chief Superintendent".

The third recommended, "The main criteria for promotion is the recommendation of your Divisional Chief Superintendent ....."  
Of interest is the fact that all references to the importance of Chief Superintendents' recommendations were made by candidates who were unsuccessful at the last divisional promotion board.

The third area which brought comment was the reliability of the selection interview in determining whether those candidates who merit promotion are in fact selected. 8 respondents made either direct or oblique reference to the suitability of the selection interview in the promotion selection system.

1 unsuccessful candidate at the last divisional promotion board pointed out that "The interview is far too short (20-30 minutes). More notice and attention of the officers previous appraisals ..... the officer may be a good supervisor who is unable to project himself on a promotion board."

An unsuccessful candidate touched upon the problem of consistency amongst individual promotion boards. He said, " ..... it appears selection requirements differ between these boards."

Several officers commented upon the difficulty which they encounter in projecting an accurate picture of themselves in the false surroundings of a promotion board. 1 unsuccessful candidate crystallised the problem in the words, " ..... inability to project oneself on such interview ....."

Another said, " ..... capability of expressing oneself adequately to the board."

The fourth common thread which ran through the anecdotal comments made by candidates was the influence created by membership of particular organisations. 6 respondents made direct reference to believing that membership of organisations such as Rotary and Freemasonry would have an influence on an individuals chances of success at a promotion board. Other comment was made to the effect that involvement with the sport of rugby influenced the selection process. Of interest is the fact that all comments concerning the influence of outside organisations came from candidates who were unsuccessful at the last promotion board.

#### QUALITATIVE DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE 3

Of the 77 candidates who returned questionnaires, only 7 included some element of qualitative response in addition to the ranking of questionnaire statements. There was no common thread running through what was said, and some of the statements merely dealt with officers' impressions of statements included in the questionnaire.

1 Superintendent commented, "previous disciplinary convictions or allegations" would be carefully considered by a promotion board. He also demonstrated that he felt that either nepotism or paternalism was at play, by indicating that a candidates chances of success were higher "where the candidate is personally known to those on the panel, e.g. has a Headquarters post in daily contact with hierarchy."

Another Superintendent viewed "assessments on acting up ability" as being an important factor to be considered by the board.

A Chief Inspector made an oblique criticism of the selection interview as a reliable tool for selecting candidates when he said, "In general both at divisional and force level, I feel that perhaps too much emphasis is placed on "impressions" formulated of an individual during an interview with less emphasis placed on their overall professional ability."

A Chief Superintendent indicated the store he places in the appearance of candidates when he said "Reference should be made to the appearance of the officer. As he is offering himself for Sergeant's rank a smart officer is still needed in the modern police service, if only to ensure an amount of discipline will remain and this by the appearance of the officers under his command. "Pride in their appearance", that is still needed today."

#### QUALITATIVE DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRE 4

Of the 142 questionnaires returned, 50 contained qualitative responses in addition to the quantitative ranking of statements.

The common theme which ran through many of the comments was one concerning the validity of the selection interview as a reliable tool for selecting promotion candidates. 12 respondents made reference to the selection interview with varying degrees of criticism.

1 unsuccessful candidate at the last board commented "The interview does not reflect totally the abilities of which he is capable - too much seems to be on "communicative skills" and not enough on experience and ability to perform the job as Sergeant."

Another candidate who was successful at the last divisional promotion board commented "Too much emphasis on the 1/2 hour interview which does not give a true reflection of the officers ability."

1 respondent who was unsuccessful at the last divisional promotion board attempted to make a flippant comment by saying "I would suggest that senior officers on promotion boards have no more idea of what a good candidate for promotion is than did the senior officers who promoted them in the first place! (non constructive criticism)." Despite the fact that this comment was

made by an officer who was attempting to pillory officers for whom he had no respect, it touched on the valid criticism that selectors are untrained for their role.

A further unsuccessful candidate commented that "The ability to overcome the unnatural atmosphere of a board and to perhaps deceive the board by performing outside of natural character" will ensure success.

Finally, the comments of a candidate who was unsuccessful at the last board suggests that he or she is hinting at nepotism or paternalism by saying "Promotion board selectors should not be divisional Superintendents with the Chief Superintendents' recommendations but that assessment of candidates should be carried out by senior officers of different divisions, thus being assessed on his/her personal record plus the interview. Personal preference and bias would then be reduced."

The remaining respondents who commented on this aspect of the selection procedure merely reiterated the feelings echoed in the statements which appear above.

Another area which produced a number of comments was the influence of academic qualifications upon the selection board. 3 respondents brought up this topic.

1 who was unsuccessful at the last divisional promotion board commented "Further qualifications will provide success in promotion even if that person is not the best candidate."

Another who was successful at the last board made his feelings known regarding academic qualifications by saying "Officers who indicate their willingness to participate in further academic studies will be more likely to be successful."

A third successful candidate demonstrated his contempt for academic qualifications with his curt comment. "Academic qualifications tend to impress".

5 respondents made comments which indicated that they felt particular aspects of experience were of great importance in the selection procedure.

An officer who was unsuccessful at the last divisional promotion board commented, "Maturity - an officer is rarely considered for promotion prior to having 10 years service."

Another successful candidate felt that the point in an officers service when he passed the promotion qualifying examination was influential. He commented, "When a candidate passed a qualifying examination, whether early or later in his service, appears to have a bearing on promotion board decisions."



A successful officer at the last divisional promotion board outlined his views concerning experience by saying "More emphasis should be placed on an officer's experience as a practical police officer. There appear to be a lot more officers being promoted with very little experience and with very little police service ....."

2 further comments, the first from an officer who was unsuccessful at the last board and the second from an officer who was successful, similarly deal with the thorny issue of experience. The first officer commented "The age at which an officer joined may influence the speed of his promotion." The second officer said "Length of service - under 9 years appear not to get promoted."

There was some feeling regarding the current systems' lack of feed-back which leaves officers in a position of not knowing why they were either successful or unsuccessful at the board.

An officer who was unsuccessful expressed his views by saying "If the follow up to boards gave officers the true reason for their not being selected, then at least they would have something to work on thus assisting them to improve. Divisional Chiefs should not allow officers who are classed as no hopers to put themselves through the trauma of selection when it is a foregone conclusion that they will not get anywhere."

The second officer who was successful at the last board said "Consideration should be given to a short written explanation as to why an officer was unsuccessful at a board thus allowing rectification."

3 officers touched on what would appear to be a very important topic, namely whether those officers who sit upon promotion boards have any expertise in selection.

An officer who failed to reach the divisional promotion board makes the very valid point that "There appears to be no formal training given to those with a responsibility of selection."

A second officer who was successful at the last board commented "Whilst an officer's broad experience in meeting varied and exacting circumstances is a good indicator as to his potential and abilities, this must not by default mean that any specialisation indicates a deficiency. Such can only be discerned with correct assessment methods. The present assessment of officers fails to some degree in that personal favour could have influence on the election of a candidate for promotion."

A third officer who was successful at the last board asked a very valid question namely, "Do senior officers promote in their own image in preference to making objective assessments?"

Another area of concern is what can be conveniently referred to as "trends". An officer who was successful at the last divisional promotion board recognised that criteria influencing success vary from year to year. He said "Clearly influential is recent legislation e.g. Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. When the provisions of this Act came into operation I formed the opinion that uniformed officers were at an advantage particularly because the role of Custody Officer was so important. Officers in the C.I.D. were advised to go back into uniform to gain experience in this role."

Another successful candidate said "The most important criteria vary depending on the Chief Constables objectives for the particular year. Current priorities include community policing, employment and promotion of female and ethnic officers and employment and expanding use of special constabulary officers."

2 officers clearly believe that divisional promotion boards have an allocation of places for successful candidates and that the relative positions of a Chief Superintendent in the pecking order of Divisional Commanders will be influential.

1 successful candidate at the last board commented "The strength of your Divisional Commander in respect of others and if he appears on your particular Force Board, can be very influential. Also what division you work in and whether you have had experience of City Centre policing."

The second successful candidate commented "Because of the present allocation of a set number of promotions to each division, this seems to result in officers who are very suitable for promotion being overlooked in favour of officers from other divisions who are not as capable, being promoted merely to fill the number of promotions allocated in that division."

Finally, 2 candidates made quite telling comments regarding "influential organisations" having a part to play in the selection process. 1 candidate who was successful at the last board put it quite succinctly by saying "Member of the Force Band. Member of Force/Wales Rugby team." A second candidate who was successful at the last board commented "Officers who hold influential positions within the Force e.g. Rugby/Football sections, band, athletics etc....."

APPENDIX II

THE QUESTIONNAIRES

RANK OF RESPONDENT .....

Please examine each of the statements below and score them on the scale indicated according to your perceptions of their truthfulness. Your scoring should be based on the assumption that candidates are applying to become inspectors.

- Scale
- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | = | Agreement with the statement                          |
| 2 | = | Partial but not total agreement with the statement    |
| 3 | = | Neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement |
| 4 | = | Partial but not total disagreement with the statement |
| 5 | = | Disagreement with the statement                       |

(Please circle your choice)

\_\_\_\_\_

1. The first impression created by a candidate at a promotion board will be influential in determining whether or not he or she passes the board. 1 2 3 4 5
2. A candidate is more likely to be successful at a promotion board if he or she has wide-ranging operational policing experience. 1 2 3 4 5
3. The overall performance of a candidate at a promotion board will be a crucial factor in determining whether he or she passes the board 1 2 3 4 5
4. A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he or she has attempted to achieve regular movement between departments is likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
5. Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they are confident individuals are likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
6. Answering promotion board questions in a manner which indicates an in-depth knowledge of the subject on which the question is based, is likely to lead to a candidate passing the board. 1 2 3 4 5
7. A candidate who indicates to a board that he is willing to work in an area of the force other than that where he is currently stationed on promotion is more likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
8. The candidate who looks like a police inspector is likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
9. Candidates who are able to demonstrate to a promotion board that they are determined to achieve promotion are likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
10. Candidates who are in the latter one-third of their probable police service are less likely to pass a promotion board than candidates in the first two-thirds of their service. 1 2 3 4 5

11. Demonstration of a good knowledge of the work and responsibilities of the rank to which a candidate is aspiring would make him or her likely to pass the board 1 2 3 4 5
  12. Evidence that a candidate possesses good communication skills would make him or her likely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
  13. A complete absence of acting-up experience would make a candidate unlikely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
  14. Too repressive or too laissez-faire an attitude towards enforcing discipline would make a candidate unlikely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
  15. Enthusiasm in relation to day to day police work, coupled with an engergetic approach to life in general, would make a candidate likely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
  16. Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they have gained some unusual policing experience, that other candidates have not, e.g. a secondment to the R.U.C., would be likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
  17. Extensive acting-up experience would make a candidate likely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
  18. Candidates who are able to demonstrate to a promotion board that they have had work experience outside the police service - particularly in a supervisory capacity - would be more likely to pass the board than candidates whose only work experience was policing. 1 2 3 4 5
  19. Evidence that a candidate is mature in attitude is likely to result in him or her passing a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
-



The above statements have dealt with various criteria which may be influential in the promotion selection process. You have been asked to score the statements assuming that they relate to candidates who are aspiring to the rank of inspector. If there are any other criteria which you feel may be influential in the promotion selection process which have been omitted, please list them below.

Please examine each of the statements below and score them on the scale indicated according to your perceptions of their truthfulness. Your scoring should be based on the assumption that the statements relate to sergeants applying to become inspectors.

Scale: 1 = Agreement with the statement

2 = Partial but not total agreement with the statement

3 = Neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement

4 = Partial but not total disagreement with the statement

5 = Disagreement with the statement

(Please circle your choice)

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 1. A candidate is more likely to pass a promotion board if he or she has had CID experience.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. A candidate who possesses an approachable personality is more likely to pass a promotion board.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they have a settled domestic background are more likely to pass the board.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. An ability to motivate others will make a candidate more likely to pass a promotion board.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Candidates who possess a charismatic personality are more likely to pass a promotion board.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they diligently follow force policy, even though they might not always agree with it, are more likely to pass a promotion board. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Candidates who have gained experience in more than one division of the force are more likely to pass a promotion board.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. Individuals who demonstrate that they are self confident are more likely to pass a promotion board.                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Candidates who have gained wide ranging varied police experience are more likely to pass a promotion board.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he or she is highly ambitious is likely to pass the board.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Candidates who are excitable characters are unlikely to pass a promotion board.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. A candidate who demonstrates to a promotion board that he holds firm ideas and is not easily swayed is more likely to pass the board. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Candidates who are boisterous characters are more likely to pass a promotion board.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they possess initiative are more likely to pass the board.                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. An ability to make sound decisions based upon rational thinking is likely to make a candidate successful at a promotion board.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Candidates who can convince a promotion board that they are individuals who are highly motivated are likely to pass the board.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Candidates who possess a wide range of abilities are more likely to be successful at a promotion board.                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. Candidates who can satisfy a promotion board that they possess leadership ability are more likely to be successful.                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

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|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19. Candidates who convince a promotion board that they are reliable individuals are more likely to pass the board.                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. A promotion board candidate's length of service will be an important factor in determining whether he or she passes the board.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. Candidates who demonstrate to a board that they have a good theoretical knowledge of policing are more likely to pass the board.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they are dedicated to the police service are more likely to pass the board.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Candidates who convince a promotion board that they are adaptable are more likely to pass the board.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. A candidate who is willing to accept the judgements made of him by others is more likely to pass a promotion board.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. The age of a candidate appearing before a promotion board will be influential in determining whether he or she is successful.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he carries out his policing duties with professionalism is more likely to pass the board.     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they have the ability to generate enthusiasm in others are more likely to pass the board. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they are perceptive are more likely to pass the board.                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

29. Candidates who have the ability to accurately assess others are more likely to pass a promotion board.

The above statements have dealt with various criteria which may be influential in the promotion selection process. You have been asked to score them assuming they relate to candidates who are aspiring to the rank of Inspector. If there are any other criteria which you feel may be influential in the promotion selection process which have been omitted, please list them below.

\* delete as necessary.

RANK OF RESPONDENT .....

Please examine each of the statements below and score them on the scale indicated according to your perceptions of their truthfulness. Your scoring should be based on the assumption that candidates are applying to become sergeants.

- Scale    1   =   Agreement with the statement
- 2   =   Partial but not total agreement with the statement
- 3   =   Neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement
- 4   =   Partial but not total disagreement with the statement
- 5   =   Disagreement with the statement

(Please circle your choice)

- 
1. A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he is able to express himself well orally is likely to pass the board.    1   2   3   4   5
  2. A candidate who convinces a promotion board that he is determined to pass the board is likely to succeed.    1   2   3   4   5
  3. An ability to get on with other people is likely to lead to a candidate passing a promotion board.    1   2   3   4   5
  4. Evidence that a candidate possesses good leadership skills is likely to lead to him being successful at a promotion board.    1   2   3   4   5
  5. A candidate is likely to pass a promotion board if he has wide ranging policing experience.    1   2   3   4   5
  6. A candidate who convinces a promotion board that he has a high level of professional knowledge is likely to pass the board.    1   2   3   4   5

7. A candidate who demonstrates to a promotion board that he has good reasoning powers which enable him to make balanced judgements is likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
8. An ability to grasp issues quickly is likely to make a candidate successful at a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
9. Fluency in a Foreign Language is likely to be influential in determining whether a candidate passes a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
10. A candidate's level of academic qualification is likely to be influential in determining whether he passes a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
11. Candidates who demonstrate a high level of intellectual ability are likely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
12. A candidate's track record of commitment to the Service is likely to be influential in determining whether he passes a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
13. A self confident candidate is likely to be successful at a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
14. Candidates who demonstrate that they have a good knowledge of topical policing issues are likely to be successful at a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
15. A candidate who satisfies a promotion board that he is mature is likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
16. An extrovert character is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an introvert character. 1 2 3 4 5
17. A candidate who is able to make an accurate assessment of his own ability is more likely to be successful at a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
18. Candidates who demonstrate to a promotion board that they are able to accept criticism are likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5

19. A candidates level of enthusiasm towards his job is likely to be influential in determining whether he will pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
20. Candidates who posses good communication skills are likely to be successful at a romotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
21. Candidates who have had experience in the CID are likely to be successful at a prodotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
22. Candidates who have served in HM Armed Forces prior to joining the Police Service are likely to be successful at a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
23. Candidates who have held a supervisory responsibility in some form of employment outside the Police Service are likely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
24. Male candidates are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than female candidates. 1 2 3 4 5
25. Written reports upon a candidates' suitability for promotion are likely to be influential in determining whether he or she passes a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
26. A candidate who has reached the limit of his capacity and shows no potential is unlikely to pass a promotion board. 1 2 3 4 5
27. Candidates who satisfy a promotion board that they have a track record of application to duty are likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
28. A candidate's own belief in his readiness for promotion will be influential in determining whether he passes the board. 1 2 3 4 5
29. A candidate who performs well at a promotion board interview is likely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5
30. A candidate who does not fit a promotion board chairman's expectations of an officer who is suitable for promotion is unlikely to pass the board. 1 2 3 4 5



The above statements have dealt with various criteria which may be influential in the promotion selection process. You have been asked to score the statements assuming that they relate to candidates who are aspiring to the rank of sergeant. If there are any other criteria which you feel may be influential in the promotion selection process which have been omitted, please list them below.

Please examine each of the statements below and score them on the scale indicated according to your perceptions of their truthfulness. Your scoring should be based on the assumption that the statements relate to constables applying to become sergeants

- Scale:
- 1 = Agreement with the statement
  - 2 = Partial but not total agreement with the statement
  - 3 = Neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement
  - 4 = Partial but not total disagreement with the statement
  - 5 = Disagreement with the statement

(Please circle your choice)

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. An officer who has served in an operational support unit is more likely to be successful at a divisional promotion board interview than an officer who has not.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. The length of time that an officer has been in the police service will have a marked effect on the likelihood of him or her passing a divisional promotion board irrespective of other factors.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. An officer who has served in HM Armed Forces prior to joining the police service is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is otherwise similarly qualified for promotion but who has not been in the Armed Forces. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. An officer who is coloured is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is white.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Officers who have had experience of policing ethnic minority communities are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who have not had such experience.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |

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|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6.  | Officers who are members of<br>influential organisations outside the<br>police service are more likely to be<br>successful at a promotion board than<br>officers who are not members.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7.  | Officers who hold a degree are<br>more likely to be successful at a<br>promotion board than officers who do<br>not hold a degree.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8.  | An officer who has been divorced is less<br>likely to be successful at a promotion<br>board than an officer who is married or<br>has never been married.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9.  | Officers who exhibit an ability to<br>naturally lead by example are more likely<br>to pass a promotion board than officers<br>who do not possess such an ability.                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | Officers who are related to senior<br>officers are more likely to pass a<br>promotion board than officers who do not<br>have relatives in senior positions.                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | An officer who demonstrates that he<br>is effective practically is more likely<br>to be successful at a promotion board<br>than an officer whose abilities do not<br>lie in the practical sphere. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | An officer who is a strong character<br>is more likely to pass a promotion board<br>than an officer whose character is less<br>strong.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| 13. | An officer who is popular amongst his<br>colleagues is more likely to pass a<br>promotion board than an officer who is<br>less popular.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | The age of an officer when he joined<br>the police service will have an influence<br>on whether he will be successful at a<br>promotion board.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | An officer who exhibits sound judge-<br>ment in operational situations is more<br>likely to pass a promotion board than an<br>officer who is less able in this facet<br>of police work.           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

16. An officer who has a broad breadth of experience is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer whose experience is more specialised 1 2 3 4 5
17. An officer who possesses good communication skills is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is not a good communicator. 1 2 3 4 5
18. An officer who has experience of the promotion board system is more likely to pass a board than an officer who is appearing for the first time. 1 2 3 4 4
19. An officer who has CID experience is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who has no CID experience. 1 2 3 4 5
20. An officer who has expressed a willingness to move between divisions to broaden his policing experience is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who has chosen to remain in one division. 1 2 3 4 5
21. Officers who possess an outgoing personality are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who have a more reserved personality. 1 2 3 4 5
22. A female officer is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than a male officer. 1 2 3 4 5
23. Officers who portray themselves as confident individuals are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who are less naturally confident. 1 2 3 4 5
24. A very ambitious officer is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less ambitious. 1 2 3 4 5
25. Officers who make a conscious effort to secure a good rapport with senior officers are more likely to be successful at a promotion board than officers who do not go out of their way to build up such a rapport. 1 2 3 4 5

- |     |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26. | An officer who is able to demonstrate discretion is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is lacking in this quality.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. | An officer who is ruthless is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less ruthless.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. | Once an officer has reached the latter years of his service he is less likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is younger in service.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. | An officer who is methodical regarding paperwork is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is slip shod.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. | Promiscuity by a female officer is likely to reduce her chances of success at a promotion board whereas promiscuity by a male officer is likely to have very little impact on his chances of success. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31. | An officer who is aggressive verbally to the public is less likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer whose verbal approach to the public is more sympathetic.                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. | A married officer with a stable family is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an unmarried officer.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33. | An officer whose private life is outwardly respectable is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer whose private life is turbulent.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. | An officer who is determined to achieve promotion is more likely to pass a promotion board than an officer who is less resolute in his approach.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. | Once an officer has made a large number of appearances before a promotion board his chances of being successful begin to diminish.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

36. An officer who has a lot of uniform experience is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who only has limited uniform experience. 1 2 3 4 5
37. An officer who is actively supported for promotion by a senior officer is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who does not receive such support. 1 2 3 4 5
38. An officer who is interested and active in the crime aspects of police work is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is interested and active in other aspects of police work. 1 2 3 4 5
39. An officer who is industrious in his approach to police work is more likely to be successful at a promotion board than an officer who is less productive. 1 2 3 4 5

The above statements have dealt with various criteria which may be influential in the promotion selection process. You have been asked to score them assuming they relate to candidates who are aspiring to the rank of Sergeant. If there are any other criteria which you feel may be influential in the promotion selection process which have been omitted, please list them below.

During the last set of promotion boards:

- \* I got as far as the Headquarters Board
- \* I did not get as far as the Headquarters Board.

\* Delete as applicable.

APPENDIX III

CHANGES TO THE SELECTION SYSTEM  
WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE DURING THE  
LATTER STAGES OF THIS RESEARCH

During the final stages of this research, some further rationalisation of the selection system has occurred. This was prompted mainly by concern, expressed by senior officers, that discrepancies were apparent in the standard of assessment between Divisional Promotion Boards. (One of the main elements of concern which led to this research.) The end result of this concern is that a number of modifications have been introduced for use at future Boards.

Amongst these, "Profiles" have been formulated of the core qualities which Sergeants and Inspectors should possess. Line managers will now be required to report confidentially on whether candidates measure up to the specifications set and to highlight areas of close conformity with and divergence from the profiles. These reports will be available to Promotion Boards, whose Chairmen have received a briefing on the importance of assessing according to the profiles to ensure common standards between Boards.

Also, a welcome element of feedback has been introduced. In future, Divisional Commanders will make confidential contact with Chairmen of Boards and, where appropriate, provide counselling and advice to officers who were unsuccessful.

Furthermore, more precise information will now be available to Board Chairmen on the Force's anticipated promotion requirements. This will include overall numbers, details of posts requiring



special qualifications and information on the disposition of officers according to rank, age and length of service in the rank. The inclusion of this information is aimed at ensuring a blend within ranks of age and length of service.

In time, it will be interesting to review these changes, against the backdrop of this research, to evaluate whether they have made the system more rational. However, in the meantime, it is possible to say that many of the qualities included in the profiles are similar to those mentioned in questionnaires one and three. This raises the question of whether the selection interview is an appropriate forum in which to assess conformity with the profile. Also, the problem of subjectivity remains; assessors will probably have differing views about which candidates come close to the specified profile and about which aspects should be given most weight. Finally, there remains the possibility that assessors will not use the profiles, but instead, continue to select along traditional lines and in so doing, perpetuate the current system which the Force has recognised, and this research has shown, is unsuitable.

Nevertheless, the introduction of feedback is to be welcomed. It is to be hoped that it will be of benefit to individual candidates and useful in providing them with a better understanding of the criteria which influence selection decisions. In the long term, it may also go some way towards reducing the disparity between assessors' views of the criteria

which determine success and candidates' perceptions of them

Overall, these changes must be viewed as welcome progress.

However, some doubts remain as to whether they are sufficient to allay the criticisms which the research has levelled.

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